

Soviet Literature

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FOUR SPRINGS

Before the war we moved to a large house on the Mozhaïsk Highway. And naturally, we hoped to find something special to reconcile us to living in a rather overcrowded apartment. We like to rise early, open the windows and start working in good time, but in the mornings there was a lot of noise and fuss round about us. It was disturbing.

From our large window on the fourth floor we could see the broad highway, with the wind sweeping the snow in clouds over its frozen asphalt surface. On the other side of the road stood sheds and two-story brick houses clinging to one another, looking from the height as though they had been shaken out of a pepper-pot, extending all the way to the distant silhouette of the forest. It seemed as though the city of Moscow ended here, and that the suburbs began with our house—this impression was strengthened by the name of this part of the Mozhaïsk Highway—the Kutuzov Quarter.

It was this name that brought us to the beginning of our discoveries. For a long time we had sought Kutuzov's cottage, when we unexpectedly came upon it right opposite our own window behind some kind of huge rusty boiler, between a woodpile and a wooden barrack. There were four large trees growing by the cottage—it was impossible to tell what kind they were in winter. Left of the house the road, emerging from behind tall buildings, ran up a small hill, and that was Poklonnaya Gora. Up the rise to our left we could see small wooden houses with little gardens in front of them, children playing in the yards, and cows ambling home, and all that was simply called Poklonka.

When we first took possession of our new home, it seemed obvious to me that things must have changed a great deal since the days of the Patriotic War of 1812. From a six-story house Poklonka looked like a small, flattened rise, and it seemed that the view from there could not be a very extensive one. It was only on going in to Moscow, several months later, that I saw the Kremlin and the tall buildings of the city from the top of the Poklonnaya Gora.

Kutuzov's cottage was unworthily hidden by low, scattered buildings. On entering it, we saw the faded silk of old banners which had been carried through all of Europe. Some of them had a peculiar grey tinge—the dust of many roads had eaten into the silk. My heart beat faster at the sight of them, it seemed as though they had only just been brought in and placed here.

In March, when spring came, the snow melted on the broad highway, and azure pools gleamed, giving an inverted picture of the militiaman and his shelter opposite. Passing cars, reflected with photographic accuracy, splashed the water out fanwise as they raced by. Everything seemed to open up, spacious and far-reaching, and the region around us came to life.

In the dark belt of forest we recognized Kuntsevo Park. Here we came to know the Lenin Hills, the bend of the River Moskva; Novodevichy Convent, it appeared, was quite close, and so was the bridge of the circular urban railway. The bridge looked cold, etched against the blue windy sky. Trains roared over it noisily. Under it the river was still frozen, the ice was now grey and swollen, humped, criss-crossed by darkened tracks and paths. Tufts of straw had caught on the supports and piles of ice blocks cut out from the mass shone blue. Somehow you felt the breath of youth, clean, fresh air, spring coats and wet galoshes. Fresh, cracked asphalt showed itself from under the snow—it was a pleasure to tread it, as though it were a spring birthday present. And the most commonplace things suddenly became very dear to us. Through the high vaulted gate of the large house, a sapling could be seen, and beyond it slender tracks in the wet snow. . . .

Our fear of a humdrum every-day life proved unjustified. When taken together with all the delightful things we found, it no longer troubled us. We began to look about us. The apartment was shared by two army families. The children were healthy and gay. These families had none of that superficial culture by which an appearance of smooth harmony is kept up for the neighbours only, while behind closed doors there are rifts and ruins. In the morning, from our rooms, we could hear the women getting their husbands off to work, hurrying the children off to school, calling to them to wash properly, and be quick with their dressing; something would fall, somebody would scold, there would be quarrels, but one felt that there was no concealed cancer in all this; everything was on the surface.

Beside us lived a captain and his wife, with their two boys. Across the corridor three generations of Major Sergeyev's family occupied two rooms. The first person to emerge from the door opposite ours—the first in the whole apartment—was Artem Ilyich, the major's father-in-law. He would bring a book by Leskov or Tolstoy, wipe the corner of the oil-cloth on the kitchen table, and tucking his

long legs comfortably beneath it, settle down to read, smoking a mild cigarette which he had rolled himself. Sometimes he prepared a canvas and placed it at the window, while he made a frame or cleaned his brushes. He was a tall, broad-shouldered man, with thick light hair sprinkled with grey, and usually wore a striped shirt and tie. Artem Ilyich was forever looking at the view from the window. Humming his favourite song, "And in a certain village how I loved a certain maid..." he would move right and left before the window, selecting which view to sketch. But when other people were about he would be embarrassed, saying that he was "no artist", and tried to get his half-finished picture out of the way, so that nobody could criticize it before it was ready. He did not like to be told by anybody that he was talented.

"What is talent?" he asked. "We're all talented, for that matter, when we're doing what we like. Look at Pauline—she's talented in looking after the children. But what comes first—love or talent? In my opinion, love. Well, and I love nature—the sky, the forest. Perhaps the ability to love it to the extent of wanting to reproduce it, immortalize it—perhaps that's hidden talent, but it can emerge only through hard work and utter devotion to it. Dive into it head first. And I don't do that. I've some sort of ability, of course, that's true! Did all kinds of things when I was young. Played *Neznamov* in *Guilty Though Guiltless*. And I played it rather well, I think. I was still a locomotive driver then..."

He was employed in the offices of the Belorussian Railway, and had to go early to work. He and Pauline's mother, Darya Romanovna, lived on excellent terms. Although Artem Ilyich was not Pauline's father, nobody would have ever guessed it. She has been his daughter since she was three years old, and her daughters were his grandchildren.

There was something simple, warm and kindly about this man, the oldest in the apartment, something that did everybody good.

One day an old friend of Major Sergeyev, also a major, visited our apartment. He arrived just as Pauline was washing the children in the kitchen.

The major knocked at the door, asking: "May I come in?"

"Yes, it's all right now, come right in," Pauline replied. He opened the kitchen door.

Five-year-old Galka was standing on the table, which was spread with a sheet. She was wrapped in a large turkish towel, out of which peeped her round, rosy face, with tiny beads of perspiration on her forehead; her wet hair was dripping trickles of water down her face which she was catching with her tongue.

Without turning to the door, her mother began drying the little girl's head. Through the steamy glass of the window, the blue sky over the Lenin Hills could be seen, and if one looked down from the fourth floor, there was the last snow in the Poklonka yards, low and dusty. The snow had disappeared completely from the slopes of the railway embankment, and the black, wet soil lay stretched out, in long ribbons.

Pauline seized Galka, bulky in her towel, and hugging her closely, lifted her with some

difficulty from the table, and turned her bright, youthful face to the major.

Pauline's face and eyes always wore their sweetest expression when she was doing something for the children. I loved to look at her at those times—she glowed with pride and happiness. It certainly did no harm for the major to see Pauline with her "brood", as she always called her children.

As she turned to the major, without recognizing him at first, her whole face seemed to be saying: "This is mine! The best thing I have!" Then she suddenly cried:

"Heavens! It's Sasha! Where have you dropped from? Why, I thought it was someone else... Wait a minute, I'll just take Galka out..."

Then bracing her strong, slender body, she swiftly carried an awkwardly-sitting Galka into the room. The little girl's rosy heels peeped out from beneath the towel, and she kept trying to free her bundled-up head to see who had come. It was no easy matter for her mother to carry her, and we could hear her scolding: "Don't wriggle so much."

Pauline soon came back to the kitchen, saying that the room wasn't tidied up yet, and then disappeared again.

The major walked through the kitchen and stood still in front of another girl standing in her petticoat and liberty bodice. She was two years older than Galka, with curly hair, a round forehead, and thin, delicate features, rather Italian-looking. When the major looked at her, she swiftly flashed her eyes at him and began to fumble for something on the chair where her clothes were lying.

"The image of her mother!" cried the major, taking her by the shoulders and turning her face to his. "You're Lenchka?"

"I've lost a stocking," said the little girl, tossing her head mischievously and smiling. "It's just gone and hidden itself... It's long and it slipped away."

"Well, just think!" and the visitor turned to me. "It's the children that show you how the years fly. You keep thinking you're still young, and then you suddenly see that the baby's grown into the living image of her mother."

The major picked up the girl, kissed her dark eyes, still damp from the bath, and then put her down again on the floor. He stood there in the kitchen telling us about his journey from the Far East where we too had once lived—in the same town he had just left. The usual talk of army men and their families when they meet.

We heard Pauline's voice calling from her room.

"What are you doing, Lida? Go and get undressed!" And the third girl, a slender, long-legged colt, shot into the kitchen.

She recognized the major at once, and glancing upwards from under her brows with some shyness, nodded and said:

"How do you do, Uncle Sasha! I remember you."

"Oho! See what Lida's grown into!" said the major.

Pauline followed her daughter in, bath towel in her hands. A large rubberized apron, the kind worn by yardmen, covered the

front and sides of her dress. The major gave it his instant approval.

"A grand idea!" he said, with his very attractive laugh. "How to have a large family and still keep tidy." He looked at Pauline as though he had never seen her before; perhaps he was picturing how she washed and dried the children, carried them from the kitchen into the room, then tidied up after them, took off the apron, and hey presto!—came out neat and pretty!

"What a woman you've become!" he said at last, when Pauline, after taking Lenchka into her room, began drawing off Lida's blue turtle-neck sweater. "You're prettier than ever! How many children have you now?"

"Three," Pauline replied. "And I'd have liked another three, but Mitya protested. Said we'd be spending all our youth on looking after children. And how's Claudia? Isn't she planning to present you with a son yet?"

"No, we don't seem to have any luck as regards children." The major walked towards the window and looked out.

"Just see how mischievous mine are," said Pauline. "They keep the place in a mess, throw paper about, don't do what they're told, but..." She broke off and looked at the major. He could read the end of the sentence in her glowing eyes. She was speaking of the children! The prettiest, of course, was Lena, "the image of her mother," as the major had noted, except that Lena's eyes were dark, while her mother's were grey. But the mother's favourites were the eldest and the youngest, who were like their father. She began to talk about them at once.

"Lida's rather delicate. She's behind with her lessons at school sometimes because she's there one day, and home the next. She runs a temperature. She ought to go south in the summer. Galka—she's a little butter ball, she'll stop at home with Grandmother."

"Yes, and Grandmother!" the major remembered. "How's she? Is she all right?"

"Quite well, thanks. She's beginning to get used to being called 'Granny,'" laughed Pauline.

She ran into the room, from whence a flood of gay laughter and conversation could be heard.

"Come along, hurry up, Lena! There's nowhere to ask Uncle Sasha to sit. Now what are you thinking about? Turn around!... Can't even unbutton your own clothes!..."

A shrill penetrating young voice replied: "But the button at the back of my tummy doesn't undo. I can't reach it."

The major burst out laughing and went into neighbour Sergeyev's room.

The next day the whole Sergeyev family was excited over Uncle Sasha's visit—the whole family called him "Uncle Sasha." Grandmother Darya Romanovna, a tall old lady with thick black hair touched with grey, very polite, kindly and talkative, told us eagerly how they had lived with Sasha for five years in the same apartment in the Far East. Sasha's wife was a fine woman, plump and quiet—nobody could quarrel with her, even in the kitchen they shared. They had all lived like one family. They had had no children, it's true....

In the evening Uncle Sasha went to the theatre with Pauline. They came back in time to have supper with Sergeyev, who returned late from the Artillery Academy. A pile of plates heaped up on the kitchen table—nobody had time to waste on them, everybody wanted to sit around and hear how Sasha liked Moscow, and Artem Ilyich, after preparing another canvas, began drawing Sasha's portrait. Somebody told him that it was beginning to look like him, whereupon Artem Ilyich replied:

"Yes, yes—Sasha, you know, there's character in his face..." as though the quality of the portrait depended on Sasha.

Five days later, the major, after detaching the three small girls who were clinging to him, and kissing Pauline and Granny, continued his journey to the Kislovodsk spa, promising to visit them on his way back.

Soon after the major's departure, Pauline's husband was transferred from Moscow to some place beyond Pskov. His unit was near the border. Major Sergeyev, who was deeply attached to his children, left his wife's parents in Moscow, and taking his family with him, went away, "travelling light", as he said, until everything was fixed up, until he had an apartment and could send for them all. Pauline gay and pretty, left in a broad black hat with some white lace peeping out beneath her chin. Running down the stairs, she stopped on the landing for a moment to call up some last request to her mother, and then ran lightly down the rest of the steps, heels tapping, surrounded by frolicking youngsters. We collided with them as we came home.

"Here I am taking my brood out to pasture!" cried Pauline, her eyes sparkling, and we wished her bon voyage.

The war caught us in Vesyegonsk, and from there we hastened back to Moscow. The moment we left the station we felt a change in the city. There was a feeling of emptiness in the air, although the crowds and the traffic were greater than usual. There were a great many soldiers at the station and in the centre of the city—some returning from leave, others from rest homes and spas, others on their way "over there"... Taxis weren't running any more.

At home we were warmly welcomed. As always in time of danger, people wanted to get together.

That same evening, Sasha arrived.

Darya Romanovna was delighted to see him, but when he told her how difficult travelling was, she became worried and began blaming Mitya for dragging the children with him to the frontier.

"But whoever expected anything like this," said the major.

Nevertheless, he too was worried about Pauline and the children.

Early the next morning, before even Artem Ilyich was up, the bell rang sharply—three rings, then another impatient three. Slippers flapping along the floor, Darya Romanovna ran along the corridor, but stopped before opening the door to whisper: "Dear good Lord have mercy on us..." and probably crossed herself.

The next instant there came a cry from the doorway:

"Pauline! Pauline!" She burst into tears, lifted something and carried it along the corridor. "How Galka's grown! Sasha! Artem Ilyich! They've come! They're all well!" Words and happy laughter poured out in an incoherent stream. Sasha came out of Sergeyev's room, and the captain's two boys, Vitali and Oleg, from theirs.

"Good day, Polly," said the major. "But did Mitya leave you to travel alone with the children?"

Pauline replied in a firm, businesslike manner:

"He couldn't come with us. They're already fighting. I've seen wounded. . . ."

"Good heavens!" cried the grandmother. "Then that means Mitya's under fire?"

"We were under fire too when we were on the way. A splinter chipped the wall of the compartment just above Galka, right over her head. . . ." Pauline went into her room while Granny, with ejaculations of horror, undressed and kissed the children. They were all tired and subdued—except Galka, whose laughter could be heard, until it was cut off when the door was closed.

And that was how news of fighting with the Germans came to our apartment. Everybody knew that the war had begun, the German advance was arousing alarm and apprehension, but it was all somewhere or other, vague and far away. But now here was a woman whose ears had heard firing, whose eyes had seen wounded. And here were these little girls—Galka, Lenchka, Lida—who had been under fire. But how was that possible—to fire on children? Why, they might be hurt or killed. Women came from neighbouring apartments and they too were horrified, it was all real and in earnest. So that was what war was like! These women had always thought of children as being immune—just because they *were* children, and because they were *their* children. After all, they were only little. . . .

For the first time we saw Pauline with a dull and depressed look in her eyes. The oldest girl, Lida, wandered sadly about the apartment. She did not want to play with the boys next door, she did not know what to do with herself. Galka and Lenchka laughed and shouted as usual, ran out of the passage onto the stairs, pressed their fingers to the bathroom tap to make the water squirt until the whole of the bathroom walls were splashed.

Little Oleg came in from outside and complained to his mother that somebody had hit him, and told us that a train had come along the line to Kiev Station—he had seen it himself—full of wounded Red Army men.

Pauline and the captain's wife at once hurried to the station. All morning they helped to carry out the wounded and feed them, and on returning home, wept at the memory of especially bad cases. The major came up to Pauline.

"It's no good crying," he said sympathetically. "It's what you've got to expect in a war, what's there surprising about it?"

Pauline started back with a furious look. He wanted to say something else, but she cut him short.

"Be quiet. . . Be quiet. . . Or I—I shan't be able to bear the sight of you." Then, af-

ter a moment's silence, she said as though to herself, in a low voice: "That means, this is what it's going to be like now? . . ."

I could understand her. In the first days of the war we all had the same feeling—it was all some mistake, the war would stop. But that which was bearing down upon us was inescapable; it rolled on, advanced, broke upon us, and we had to brace our shoulders and take it, and bear it, and repel it. But how—we could not yet see.

Nobody could forecast as yet how the war would go. Events were crowding too fast, by the time we learned the news it was already of the past. We all waited for a word from Stalin.

And it was now that all of us, people so widely different, began to draw closer together. It turned out to be lucky for us that we had chanced to come to this very house. In a new place one should never look for "beds of roses" under the window, or unusual neighbours, on the contrary, it's best that everything should be very ordinary, and then there will be plenty in it that is good.

One is sometimes struck by the fact that before some momentous event something seemed to have foretold it, nudged your elbow, so to speak, but you, as you were at the time, ignored these omens, did not guess why they came. It is only when the events occur that you think back and see how strangely something seemed to fit together, how threads appeared which are now knitting together. And so it was now—we recalled how three months previously we had looked for Kutuzov's cottage and Poklonnaya Gora, how we had wanted due honour to be paid to our banners. Now all this appeared significant, and we sought and found in the past a promise that these hard times would pass, writing their page in history, and knew that we were yet to see that page turn.

"Dad says," Pauline remarked one day, "Now this is the time when a man can show what he's made of!"

The major spent several days with the Sergeyevs. During that time Pauline went to donate blood, and returned home rather embarrassed; there had been very many donors.

"And there I was thinking," she told Sasha, "see the sort I am! The first to go! And there were already hundreds of the first! I had to wait a long time."

You couldn't tell by looking at her that she had found this difficult and rather unpleasant. The major stood in front of her, swaying back and forth on his feet together with Galka, who had seized him round the waist.

"You know," he said, "It's only now that I realize how deeply this war has penetrated into our people. It's only lasted for a few days, and it's already entered so acutely and so profoundly." He passed his hand over his head, smoothing back the long fair hair from his forehead to the nape, and his large square brow reminded me of Furmanov¹.

He was quite right; this handsome, high-spirited woman, who could have passed proudly through the world with her three chil-

¹ Furmanov was Commissar of Chapayev's division, and author of the book *Chapayev*.

dren, delighting all by showing how charming people can be, had given her blood for the soldiers defending her country, her children, her home. And it was just that which was so right.

She burned to do more for her country. . . She was already waiting for the postman in the mornings, although of course there was no hope for letters so soon; the normal railway traffic had been upset.

In those first days of the war Pauline was the same, and yet not the same. She was the same in her way of putting on her "yardman" apron in the mornings, pouring out water into the bowl, taking the brush, washing the children's hands and making them brush their teeth. She plaited Lida's hair, looking round at anybody who came in at the moment, and said with sweet, shining eyes: "Just look what funny little plaits!" But one could feel that the glow in her eyes went off somewhere past the little girl's head, far into the distance, into some unknown point in the west. . . And it was there that all her words were sent.

In the evening the major left by train. Everybody was sorry to see him go.

"Already?" said Pauline. "Things have been easier with you here. . . Well, goodbye, then! I wish I could be there with you. But . . . I can't. I feel as if it's I that's in charge of everything here now, I've got to look after things."

On the eleventh day of the war, on opening the window at six in the morning, I heard that Stalin was just going to speak. In the same instant Artem Ilyich called from the corridor.

"Come in, come in and listen to Stalin," and he ran into his room, leaving the door ajar.

Stalin's speech at once brought everything right to our door. We were all participants in this war, wherever we might be working. Stalin told us how a Soviet person should act, and what we must do to ensure victory. We must work honestly, nobody could stand aside from the great struggle of our people, in which we were participants.

These were hot July days. In the evenings, through the open windows we could see the green belt of Kuntsevo Park, but now when they looked at it, people would say: "There are AA guns there," instead of saying: "It would be nice to take a walk in the park," as they used to. Those times were over, we did not know whether it was for a long or short time, and now each one had to find his proper place in the tremendous ranks of the people, where everyone was needed. That was all we talked about now—that and the war. Grandmother Darya Romanovna was certain that it would be over soon, she was not disturbed in this assurance by the fact that the Germans were advancing farther and farther into our country. "They'll go back the same way they came!" she would say significantly, as though she alone knew just how the Germans would be driven from our land.

Artem Ilyich, usually taciturn, now talked to us about his son by his first marriage, who was in the navy, about all that was happening, and how he understood Stalin's speech.

"Stalin spoke of 'our glorious Red Army.' But he doesn't speak empty words. That means, that when he says 'glorious,' he's telling us: have faith in the army, despite its temporary setbacks. For him, the army hasn't stopped being glorious, heroic, so we too can expect great things from it. They'll come. Such a talented people cannot fail to be victorious."

Once Pauline said to her father:

"If ever anybody had talked of Mitya and great deeds, before the war, I'd just have laughed. Remember how he used to say: 'Sitting's better than standing, and lying down's better than sitting. . . ' But I've seen him there, during a German raid. . . That's how I see him all the time, day and night. . . And I want terribly to go to him, to be there with him. But he told me: 'Take care of the children. . . '"

Then she received a letter from her husband. They were still in the same place, they had not retreated. The place where they had said goodbye, he wrote, was all wrecked by German bombs. "Just think!" said Pauline. "That was where we said goodbye! We stood there so long waiting for the train!" And that place was rendered sacred to her by their farewells and could never be destroyed by anybody.

Now there were continual streams of people in civilian clothes passing along the Mozhaisk Highway—the People's Guard. They often drilled opposite our house. Vitali and Oleg stood for three hours on the pavement, and later told us where the AA guns had been taken, and where they had been set up opposite us.

One evening, at ten o'clock, we heard the alert, the dreadful outraged voice of calamity. We were all at home. Pauline ran out into the corridor crying:

"What's that? What's that?" and knocked at our door. She had not been in Moscow during the first alerts.

We opened the door, saw her bright, startled eyes, and told her:

"That's the alert! Get the children down."

"Heavens! They've only just gone to sleep!" she wailed, and dashed into the room. She had always guarded the children's sleep, now she had to guard their lives.

The captain's wife dashed out, her green eyes dulled, crying:

"Oh, oh, my legs are giving way. Oh!"

Grandmother looked out of her door and began to calm her.

"Now just think—why should they raid Moscow? There are AA guns here." With all her heart she wanted the Germans not to come to Moscow. "And our Kutuzov Quarter has got its AA guns to defend it too. . . ."

Pauline called out angrily from her room:

"Don't stand there doing nothing! Time to talk later on. . . Get Galka dressed, she won't wake up. . . ."

People were already running down the stairs past the door, women were coaxing sleepy children. Pauline kept repeating in her room.

"Get up, now, get up! Daddy's fighting, and we're going to fight too. We're going to Daddy. . . ."

Artem Ilyich rumbled in his deep voice:

"Keep cool, Pauline, keep cool. Give me Lenka, and Granny can take Galka. . . ."

The captain's wife kept rushing from room to room, seizing her coat, her husband's top-boots; she was so pale that the freckles on her face stood out in patches, like the spots on a cuckoo's egg.

"There's no need to get so excited," said Artem Ilyich, coming out with Lenochka. "Give me Oleg, and Vitali can walk down himself. He's a big boy now, in the second class!" And he began humming softly to himself: "I picked up the packet and jumped on my horse. . . ."

"What about the door, should we lock it or not? Perhaps I'd better take some bread for the children?" The captain's wife had quite lost her head, and we had to help her.

Each adult took a child, and then we went down into the shelter.

After that there were other alerts. Grandmother was now quite certain that "they'd never let the Germans get to Moscow." But a month after the beginning of the war the first bombs screamed down over Fili, and close to us. A tall flame shot up opposite our house. Swathed in thick black scarves of smoke, it rose taller, stronger, the smoke soaring high up and spreading like the top of some gigantic tree. And all the people stationed on the roofs and at attic windows said that this was the big Fili factory on fire, and how amazing it was that the Germans should have got one of the most important targets at once like that! Big fires broke out in Presnya, by the Kiev Station and right behind our house, by the railway line. We could hear the scream of bombs, the roar of explosions, the barking of AA guns. Searchlights criss-crossed over the Mozhaisk Highway, and when two of them met, we suddenly discerned a silvery aeroplane. Something blazed up in the air and began falling . . . everybody shouted, welcoming the first success in our district, until an army captain who was standing near our house, realizing what it was, called out:

"They've dropped a flare! Get down to the shelter quick! They'll be dropping high explosives in a minute."

And sure enough, a howling bomb came down . . . down . . . and exploded. This happened in our peaceful district, and people still continued working. From the roof we could see the trains moving silently through the cutting; puffs of white steam would rise over the slope, each one as it dissipated being followed by another. Habit would bring the thought: "But they may be killed like that!" Yes, they might be killed, but the thing was, not to die, but to live and people learned to continue working without thinking of death.

Wounded were already being brought to the hastily organized first-aid post in our house. A woman from Poklonka was running about the empty streets, gesticulating, frantically clutching strands of her dishevelled hair, crying: "My child! My child!" She would stop . . . then as she realized the full horror of it, run on again with the same cry of "My child! My child!" Pauline heard this despairing cry of another mother and it was too much for her. When she came home after the "all clear", she wept long and bitterly, saying that she

"could not forget the child" that she had never seen.

"I always thought I was a kind person," she said. "But I choke with rage when I think that they're killing our children. I'm sure I'm not doing the right thing, I ought to go to the front!"

The next morning we saw that the damage had been much less than we had thought. It was not the Fili factory people had spoken about that had burned, but a small factory making roofing felt—that was what had caused the huge black clouds of smoke and the leaping flames. We found a bomb crater behind a big house on Kutuzovskaya, and there was another by the Kiev Station.

At eleven o'clock that night the German bombers flew over again . . . and a third night, and a fourth. Now, everybody waited tremulously for evening to fall, saying: "Shall we get through tonight without a raid, or not?"

Once in August, during an alert, I looked out of the kitchen window at the red and white houses huddled together beyond the railway amidst the thick green of the grass and trees. The quick staccato firing of the AA guns opposite our house had only just ceased, and there was that awful silence when one did not know whether they had got through to Moscow or been driven off. The soft blue glow of early morning seemed particularly peaceful and untroubled, reaching right to the Lenin Hills. Two birds flew silently past the window panes. The earth, trees, grass and houses shone in the first rays of the rising sun.

Everything in nature was rich, generous and fearless. But while the quiet summer night brooded over the houses, beneath their roofs hundreds of people suffered, tormented with fear for themselves and their dear ones. Behind those heavily blacked-out windows, people's hearts were beating unevenly, in alarm, they were straining their ears, yet fearing to hear the roar of an aeroplane; fists were clenching in rage, and everybody would rush to grab whatever was most precious to them, whatever they must keep by them in this time of deadly danger, to preserve it or be destroyed together with it.

During the first bombings, nearly everybody in our house went down to the shelter with big suitcases, bundles or sacks; they all thought that they had a great many things that were essential or valuable. But after the suitcases had been carried downstairs, and then up again to the fifth or sixth story time and time again, some of the things that were not so important disappeared from them. People learned to select, to understand the value of things better, and not to attach such importance to them.

Pauline always went down to the shelter with only one small bundle—papers and the children's photographs. The captain's wife made her husband and children take warm overcoats, topboots and galoshes, and that was something we could understand; she came from a peasant family, and it was in her bones to regard clothing and boots as the family's main possessions.

"My father," she told us, "kept the top-boots he was married in for forty years; he only wore them to church or to sit out of doors in, and when he was dying he sent for

his brother and presented him with the boots!"

Several days later, we went to one of the state farms along the Belorussian railway line to help with the field work. We were in the midst of forests, particularly fresh and pleasant that summer, full of berries and mushrooms, where deer tracks could be seen among the junipers, and dense polished cranberry leaves glistened in the swamps. Further to the west, the Germans had already infested these forests—people who had not been born there, not grown up on that land, but had come to seize it and destroy those who defended and loved it. From the daily communiques we knew that the enemy was approaching Moscow, but from the people whom we met coming from the west, and from our own hearts, we also knew that our country's resistance was increasing with every day.

We returned late in the evening a week later, pulling in at the Moscow-II station, and approaching our house from the west. The road passed between kitchen gardens planted with potatoes. They were all blossoming, and in the semi-darkness a delicate lilac haze hovered over the dark green of the plants. Our house, the first big building on the west of Moscow, stood there like a fortress, tall and massive, with its darkened windows.

The captain's wife was the first to leave—she departed with her two boys for Ryazan. The alerts were too much for her, she was frightened every time the communiques were broadcast, and when she heard that we had withdrawn from some town, she would ask: "Is it a large one?..." "The Germans'll take everything away from us," she would say. "See, the factories are leaving Moscow already... They're getting them away from the Germans!" And nothing would change her, although her husband scolded her and tried to explain to her that the factories were leaving, not only in order to save them, but so that they could continue working in a safe place.

Then Pauline went, with the children; she had decided to leave them with her husband's stepbrother in Vladimir, and herself find work somewhere.

Going in one day to see Darya Romanovna, I saw Sasha's portrait on the wall. There was the faintest trace of a smile showing on the portrait, as though he had a secret of his own; the lock of fair hair fell over the forehead that was so like Furmanov's.

"Sasha's sent us a letter," said Darya Romanovna. "So far he's alive and well. The dear good Lord preserve him, he's got a hot head but a heart of gold. . . I remember when he was working in the Communist Party Bureau in his regiment, people used to bring all their troubles to him. And here's Pauline's painting. . . ."

It was a bunch of wild flowers in a glass of water, done in water colours. The painting hung beside Sasha's portrait, and was well done.

"Oh, she's very gifted," said Grandmother. "There's nothing she can't do!"

Artem Ilyich and Grandmother left unexpectedly; he was offered a job at one of the railway stations near Kharkov, and he could not make up his mind to leave his wife alone

in Moscow. She was very upset—she felt that since Pauline had left from there, this was the only place where they could meet. And Mitya often wrote to Moscow! But there was no time to spend in brooding, so she quickly rolled up everything necessary into large bundles, and taking leave of us, they went down to the tram stop, both wearing warm autumn coats although the weather had turned hot. They felt that they had to take as much with them as possible—who could say how long they would be away? While waiting for the tram they put the bundles down and sat on them; for a long time we could see through our windows the pathetic figures of these two old people setting off into the world.

Moscow had emptied. The children's seats in the trams and trolleybuses were now empty. There were no more cheeky schoolboys racing to the tram stops to slip on board without standing in the queue. It was all reminiscent of the migration of birds when the autumn tempests rage over the chilled land; but when the ice floats down to the river mouths and the grass that had been turned pale by autumn, begins to sprout green again, the birds return.

But the following spring the birds did not return. Coming back from a long journey, I entered our apartment. It seemed unusually quiet and empty. A thin film of dust lay upon everything in the rooms. I wiped the pictures standing on the table in their frames. I could have written on the paper covering the table—and I did, I wrote with my finger: "I've come home."

The main impression which that spring left with me was of the wide, quiet streets, empty, darkened houses, and a wonderful sky. We had never before been accustomed to looking at the sky at that very best of all times, when night is giving way to morning. As the night drew to a close, the sky would be dark blue, with the barrage balloons etched black against it. Swiftly it would change even while we watched it; the colour would lighten to a clear, pure shade, till it took on a greenish tinge, like sea water. The stars faded, and on either side of the Mozhaisk Highway the St. Andrew's crosses of tank barriers would impinge upon the eye. There were few passersby—the curfew prohibited night traffic without a special permit. Columns of tarpaulin-covered lorries would pass on their way to or from the front. And in all movements of men and machines, one felt the exigencies of war, and everything was done without unnecessary noise. In the utter silence one could almost hear the sun rise.

At dawn, the silver silhouettes of the barrage balloons would slowly sink to the ground, swaying slightly and floating from side to side in the clear air. A single motorcycle would rattle closer and closer, for a second drowning the faint morning sounds till it passed our house, when the roar would suddenly take on a deeper note and fade away beyond Poklonnaya Gora. The sky so blue, fresh as though it were newly washed, with clouds resting on the horizon. . . The night had passed without an alert!

The slender white columns stood out against Kutuzov's cottage. All the boards and firewood have been cleared away in front of it and

the wooden barracks taken down, so that nothing separated the traffic from the columns.

Looking at these columns, at the ash trees in their fresh green array, one had the same thought that filled the whole country: "Moscow is saved! Russia is saved!" and one felt that one was sitting on top of the world, together with everybody else in the country!

At six every morning one waited for the communique—how could anybody begin the day without that continually renewed link with the front! All our thoughts were there. At the front the sky was brightening too, night was giving place to morning, but there was no silence there, there was firing and the roar of shells, and as they shivered in the morning freshness, people would think: "What's it like in Moscow?" And in Moscow, just as with them there, was one common thought.

On one of these early May mornings Sasha ran in for a couple of hours. The silence in the apartment struck him like a blow.

"It's not like the same place," he said. "So quiet! Here, where there was all the bustling life of three generations? Those wonderful old folk. . . . Pauline and Mitya. . . . The kiddies. . . . All flown in different directions. . . ." It depressed him. "There was such seething life here. And such a united family!"

He had already been in heavy fighting west of Moscow. His face was dark with sunburn, making his eyes seem lighter than ever, but now they held a look of efficiency, confidence, and a certain hardness. He understood everything that he saw.

"I understand, and I see it all—the heroism which we expected, knew would appear; and the vileness which we didn't expect, but it's there all the same. . . ."

He read a postcard which had come from Sergeyev, wrote down the number of his field post office, and left.

In the autumn of 1942 although no permission had been given to bring children back to Moscow, the captain's wife returned with her two boys, and then Pauline brought her "brood". Her husband's relations had treated her worse than strangers, so she had taken the children to a collective farm and worked there all the year. The children had grown and become sturdy, even this little Lida, and their hair was bleached with the sun—except for Lenochka, whose dark curls still waved over her round forehead. Darya Romanovna had not yet returned. She and Artem Ilyich were living somewhere beyond Kharkov, and expected to come back to Moscow in the winter.

On the evening of her arrival, Pauline said:

"Two days for washing clothes, two days for cleaning up, and resting a bit, and then I'm going to find a job."

"How'll you manage to work?" asked the captain's wife in surprise. "What about the children?"

"They're not so small now, they'll get used to it. I can't do without working. When I was living in evacuation, that was all that kept me going—working day and night. And in the winter my old folks'll be coming. . . ." Then, after a moment's silence, she continued: "How weak we were, we women, at the beginning of the war! When we'd seen our husbands off, we began thinking where we could find some sort of mental and moral support, and when we had

to leave Moscow, we made for relatives. And the relatives saw us turn up with our children in worn shoes with sacks on our backs, and took fright. After all, they did very little to help us. . . . No, no! This war's difficult, it's terrible, ghastly, but it's done something to us, we're learning to know ourselves, to find our place in the world. A support! Here it is—our support!" and she held out her hands, palms upward.

A few days later, Pauline went to work at a factory not far from our house. At night, I would hear the sound of her sewing machine through the wall, as she made frocks for the little girls from her own old things; everything was worn out or too small. And every morning, on leaving for work, she would hurriedly kiss the three children running after her to the door, and remind them: "If there's a letter from Daddy, bring it to me at the factory." There had been no letter from Major Sergeyev for a long time.

It was a very difficult winter for everybody. Although the Stalingrad operation, the turning point, was past, we had not yet realized the full magnitude of its significance. We realized that some new quality had appeared—the valour of the Russian people in combination with a wise and bold leadership—and that we were the witnesses of a still more glorious period in our country's history than those of which we had been justly proud in the past. The future was already embodied only in the one word: victory, but life in the rear was no easier; potato, meat and milk prices were rising on the markets; the population of Moscow began to increase again. But one thing that surprised me was that the blackout did not seem an extra burden; on the contrary, the fact that we had to cover our windows carefully and walk the streets in darkness seemed to us almost like some new skill which we had acquired, learned in fighting the enemy. Pauline lived like all the other mothers, denying herself everything so that the children would have what they needed, and regretting bitterly that she had left the collective farm—there had been plenty of milk for the children there.

"I've made a big mistake," she said. "I should never have separated from Dad and Mother, split up into two households. I should have left the children with nobody but them." She was still hoping to go and work at the front.

One day a letter came for her when she was at work. Lida put on her coat and ran with it to her mother at the factory. She returned very quiet, with traces of tears in her eyes.

"What's the matter?" the captain's wife asked, whereupon Lida burst out crying noisily.

"Grandad's dead," she sobbed, and went into her room, here she wept long and bitterly. We heard her snap at Lenochka: "Let me alone you fool!" and then cry harder than ever.

Pauline came home earlier than usual, and sat with the children in her room for a long time. In the evening she came out with red, swollen eyes and told us how Artem Ilyich had died. He had been assistant station master at a small station. During a raid, the station master had been wounded, and Artem Ilyich had taken his place. A hospital train and trains loaded with petrol and machinery for the front

were standing on the line. They had managed to get the hospital train away, uncouple the burning trucks and extinguish the fire, when the German aircraft came over for the second time. The platforms loaded with machines blazed up. Artem Ilyich never left the tracks. Working together with the locomotive driver Kovrikov, he had managed to get that train away too, when a bomb burst right beside them. Kovrikov was deafened. The body of Artem Ilyich was found amidst the trucks, where it had been hurled by the blast. . . .

Pauline told us about it through her tears, and we could picture how Artem Ilyich, his cap thrust back on his light hair, had walked along by the trucks giving instructions, and probably humming: "I picked up the packet and jumped on my horse. . . ." I wanted to rise and hear, with bowed head, how the people who had been working with him had accompanied to his grave that honest, upright man, who had so loved his country.

"Here was the most ordinary man," said Pauline, pulling herself together and mastering her tears, "and he died like a hero. We're all just as ordinary—we eat and drink and quarrel, and Father lived here among us and never had a lot to say about himself, but loved us all and protected us. . . ."

The locomotive driver Kovrikov, who had helped Artem Ilyich get the trains away amid the bombs, wrote to Pauline: "When we took the hospital train to the siding, Artem Ilyich himself drove the engine, and while I was getting my breath after the smoke that had filled my lungs, he pulled half the train with machinery away. He jumped down from the engine and called out to me: 'Things are moving!' and ran to the platform trucks. . . . And that was where it got him. . . ." Kovrikov wrote that Darya Romanovna was seriously ill and it was impossible to leave her there alone. He asked Pauline to get her a recall pass to Moscow.

Coming home a month later, I found Darya Romanovna. She was sitting alone by the window in her first room, her hands lying on her lap, and crying. The captain's wife popped up from somewhere and whispered to me:

"It's no joke! To lose five kilograms of butter! Who could help crying? That's wealth today."

It appeared that Darya Romanovna had brought ten kilograms of butter with her in two jars, and in her joy at seeing her home again, had left one of them in the trolleybus. And now she was crying.

"Dear God," said Darya Romanovna, staring straight in front of her, unseeing. "Dear God! This is the very spot where he always liked to sit. Thirty years! Thirty years, and it's like a day. . . ."

She began to cry again. Her hair had gone quite grey.

In the spring of 1943 Sasha came to Moscow again, for treatment after a wound. As he climbed the staircase with its darkened windows, he heard Vitali crying noisily; his mother was dragging him up the stairs, boxing his ears with her free hand, and scolding him in a voice choked with anger.

"You thought I wouldn't catch you? I'll catch you all right, and deal with you, too!"

Hearing the child crying, I opened the door at the top of the stairs, and in the light of an open window I saw the whole picture. Oleg danced around his mother, defending his brother.

"Ma!" he was saying. "Why are you dragging him along like a war prisoner? Ma!"

The major overtook them on the landing by our door. An oblique white bandage concealed his right eye.

The captain's wife saw him and released her son, who wiped his eyes and tried to look as though he had not just been dragged with indignity up the stairs.

"Oh, but you're wounded!" she examined the major's face. "Yes, and you're a lieutenant-colonel now?" She had a wonderfully sharp eye for things like that, she was always the first to see them.

"A slight wound," said Sasha, after greeting us. "But I'm convalescent now. But why were you so angry with Vitali?"

"He's started to smoke. There's no holding him! Here I come home from the factory for lunch, and there he is, the bloody little fool, smoking! Smo-o-oking!" Previously, too, she had been in the habit of using strong language, but had taken care that strangers should not hear her. Now she did not even notice the words she was using. But the colonel noticed it. . . .

"All our children have gone to the devil with their fathers away," she complained. "You don't know how to take them in hand!"

The colonel laughed loudly. The captain's wife, not understanding what was amusing him, continued:

"Our carpenter told me yesterday that the children in the fourth entrance just take the cake, they're even worse than ours. They poured a jug of water on his head. It would be better in Moscow without children. . . ."

"No, that's not right," said the colonel. "I don't agree that it's better without children. Only there's no need to 'take them in hand' too literally. . . ." Then he asked: "Any letters from Pauline?"

A door banged down below, and somebody came running up the stairs, swinging round the bends—Pauline coming up two steps at a time, in her old gingham frock, with sandals on her bare feet, without looking where she was going. In her haste her long hair, curly at the ends, flew about. She ran past us, and only right in front of the door she cried: "Sasha!" and was just going to kiss him when she saw the bandage over his eye.

"What's that? Is it serious?" she asked, breathless with excitement and running.

"No, not very. The eye's undamaged and the sight's all right."

He stood looking down at her, holding her hand in his. Her face was haggard and pale, her neck was thin, and the opening of her frock showed the sharp protruding collar-bones. Her chest was rising and falling fast, and there was a rasp in her quickened breathing.

"Come in, Sasha, I'm in a hurry, this is our dinner hour," she said, pulling him in after her. He dropped her hand, but there was something that had surprised him. He took it again, turned it palm upwards and saw a blood filled blister on the palm of her hand.

"Heavens! Where did you get such a blister? Poor hand!"

"Eh, Sasha," said Pauline carelessly. "That's just from lack of skill. I'm going onto new work!" Then she called: "Mummy, I'm home, give me something to eat quick. Have the children had dinner?"

"What a fuss about a blister!" said the captain's wife. "Pauline's never reaped or threshed, or she'd know what blisters are. I'm working in the same factory where she is now, and I dug the whole allotment, and yet look at the hands I've got!" She displayed her small, horny hands criss-crossed with sharp lines. The colonel gave them a glance and went through the door. Nothing could have shown his attitude to the two women better than that glance.

On hearing their mother's voice, the little girls ran noisily out into the passage.

"I . . . I . . . I'm first," cried Galka, and then suddenly, in a high, thin voice: "Uncle Sasha! Uncle Sasha's come!" and all three flung themselves onto the colonel.

Lida, pale and thin—she had shot up like a young sapling—passed her hand over the white bandage on the colonel's head and asked:

"Does it hurt you very much, Uncle Sasha?"

The colonel shifted the bandage. His right eye looked out just as freely as the left, but there was a depression over the thick brow, and around the eye itself, the scars spread out, with traces of stitches. Lenchka touched the depression with her finger and asked:

"Did they stitch you up with a needle and thread?"

"Just as though they were meeting their own Pa," said the captain's wife, as she hurried past.

"Which front is your husband on?" the colonel asked me, and on hearing my reply—"I know, I know! That's a well-known army! We were about forty kilometres from them, by the Don."

"Come and eat, children, come and eat!"

Pauline called, and then, after a pause: "Who's been eating bread before dinner again? There's only two pieces here! And there's a bite out of the side of one of them. . . ." Then, with something like hysteria in her voice: "My God, where can I find bread for you?"

The colonel was standing at the door of our room. On hearing Pauline's cry, his lips tightened and his cheek twitched. We were already accustomed to having to make the bread spread over the whole day. In the captain's family the distribution was carried out very simply: the mother locked the bread in the cupboard and handed the children their portions for dinner and supper. But Pauline did not want to lock things away from her children—they ought to understand for themselves what bread meant, and respond to their mother's trust in them. The bread would last the day if it was only eaten with soup or porridge—but Pauline was not always able to give her children enough to eat.

The captain, who was working in Moscow, had the use of a lorry, and was able to bring potatoes from relatives in the country, so that his children were better fed. For Pauline, things were more difficult. She had an income of six hundred rubles, the children's ration cards and her own, worker's, ration card. But Grandmother's cards had not been issued yet,

and the elder girl was frequently ill—the extra food she needed came hard on the family budget. But nevertheless, when the captain's wife complained about the lack of soap or blueing for washing, Pauline would reply:

"Don't be silly! How can there be everything? It's wartime!"

"I didn't know you were having such a hard time . . ." said the colonel.

The ubiquitous captain's wife came up to us.

"Pauline doesn't know how to manage," she said. "Everything one day, nothing the next. Where's the sense in buying Lidochka apples? Gets her money, and in three days it's gone. She's sold every frock and skirt she had. Says she'll go naked, but she'll get the children fed. The bread they get isn't enough for children, they run about, they're growing. . . ."

The two women were absolutely different. The captain's wife would scold the boys for spoiling their shoes, and never let them go out to play in the yard. Pauline, in a similar case, would stitch up shoes from old rags during the night, display the six of them in the kitchen for a general survey, and laughing in comical doubt, ask us: "How many feet has a centipede?" The captain's wife liked to talk about the neighbours and criticize them, but Pauline preferred to mind her own business. "I don't like backbiting!" she said sharply, and not another word could be got out of her.

"The country gives us bread!" said the colonel. "And how precious that bread is! We often forget about that. We get to thinking that it's harder for us at the front than for you here."

"But it really is harder for you," I replied.

"It's sometimes very hard," he agreed, "you feel you've come to the end of your tether. But then it eases up a bit. . . Sometimes it's awfully hard, then it gets easier. But with you it's the same grind day after day, day after day. . . ." He frowned, searching for words or trying to catch some thought that had flashed through his mind. "But what I see here is better, more right, than what I expected to see. . . ."

I understood what he meant; things were very different in that house from what they had been two years ago. At first glance everything seemed pretty grim—the women's thin, tormented faces, the scolding of the captain's wife, Pauline's desperate cry about a piece of bread that had been eaten, her voice: "Where can I find bread for you?" But seen in the light of what was going on at the front, all this immeasurably hard struggle—was right, it was in keeping. If he had found a pretty, well-dressed Pauline, that would have shown her to be dishonourable, ignoble. At first, on seeing her face, her blistered hands, he had not understood how all this could happen to Pauline, of all people, but with her cares for the children, her work, donating blood and working on the allotment, she was just what she should be. He had not been mistaken in her. She was a real woman, like many thousands of other Russian women in the war.

"What a fool I was," he said to me, "not to have brought some food with me from hospital. In my table drawer there's sugar,

biscuits. . . " And he went to pay his respects to Darya Romanovna.

He began to visit us very frequently, bringing sugar and biscuits for the children, and once a pretty embroidered towel for Pauline.

"Here," he said laughing, "take this and hang it on the wall. I can't take it home anyway. If my wife saw it there'd be trouble."

"The girls made it for you?" asked Pauline.

"A girl," he corrected her.

Pauline looked squarely at him.

"I don't quite know whether you should be blamed for that or not. I'm breaking my head puzzling it out. . . ."

"Better not think about it, Pauline," said the colonel seriously. "Circumstances alter cases."

This was on the evening of the day when Lieutenant Kuzkin arrived bringing a letter and parcel from Pauline's husband. The lieutenant's name was Pavlushka. He was an immaculate young fellow, round-faced, rather fond of boasting, something of a scandalmonger, fond of a drink and a good time but without the money for it. Pauline had just returned from the allotment where she had been planting potatoes in the rain, and was wet through. In the highest of spirits—it had been so pleasant planting in the rain, and now news of her husband!—she sat down on the edge of the kitchen table, eyes sparkling, and warmed herself at the stove where things were cooking that the children had not seen for a long time—cocoa with condensed milk, packages of millet porridge concentrates and stewed fruit. The lieutenant told us about Major Sergeyev's life at the front—to judge by what he said, the major was in no danger. When we all left the kitchen, he probably tried to flirt with Pauline. What he said to her, and what she said in reply, nobody ever knew, but we all heard her run along the corridor and go out, banging the door behind her.

Two hours later Sasha arrived. He questioned the lieutenant long and closely about the fighting in his direction, and then said:

"That can't be right. What sort of tales are you telling me? Where was the lieutenant-colonel all that time? Unit commander, and not there during a battle? No, I know Mitya as well as I know myself. Don't tell the women silly stories like that. That's not the way to calm their minds! They know themselves that war's war."

Pauline was still absent. The children went to bed. The boys said that they had seen Auntie Pauline on the roof, so the colonel and I went to look for her.

That was where she was, sitting on the step at the base of the chimney, her dress neatly drawn over her knees on which her elbows were supported, her drawn, thoughtful face resting on her hands. Her eyes were dry but troubled.

"What's the matter, Pauline?" asked the colonel. "We've been waiting and waiting for you to come in."

"It's hard to tell you what the matter is," Pauline frowned, and pressed her lips together. "I can't get it straight myself. No, don't go, I'm not wanting to hide anything. I just don't believe him! I don't want to be-

lieve it. . . Or else. . . But what else can I do?" She fell silent, staring at the city spread out before her. Then she jerked out spasmodically: "Kuzkin says that Mitya's got a girl there. . . If there weren't the children, I could be with him over there. . . I don't believe Kuzkin."

The colonel said nothing, and although the questioning note in Pauline's voice on the last sentence asked for a confirmation of "Of course, Pauline, how can you believe Kuzkin!", this confirmation did not come.

"And you had a girl there too!" said Pauline viciously. "You brought that towel. . . ."

"I had?" he hesitated. "Yes, I had, but it wasn't for long and it wasn't very important."

"Then why did it happen at all?"

"I can't tell you anything of it just now. You may remember the Chekhov story where a man who was reading French racked his brains to guess what the word 'renyxa' meant. And in the end it turned out that the word was written in Russian characters, where the letters look the same, but sound different; and the moral is, that you can't read a Russian word in French. . . ."

"And what should the word have been?"

"Chepukha¹—that's what it was!"

"I don't remember that story. . . Perhaps it was that way with you. But with Mitya and me there was something—vital. . . " She turned to me. "You understand me, don't you?"

The colonel began talking of Mitya; he spoke well, and with feeling.

"But can't you understand," said Pauline, "to wait for him, to look out of the window at nights, into the far distance, and to know that he finds it quite easy to get along without me. . . ."

I moved away from them and began looking at the view of Moscow.

Here, high up, it was still quite light. The grey asphalt street looked cool and fresh. Only one car had passed along it while we were talking. A tram swung round the bend to Fili, its wheels screeching metallically on the lines. The dark border of the Kuntsevo Park was etched sharply against the light sky, cut by a red-brick factory chimney. There was no smoke coming from it—the factory was working somewhere a long way from Moscow. Over the red housetops, the fresh, pale green of the trees, the freshly-dug vegetable plots—wherever the eye travelled, it found the dark bodies of barrage balloons. They swayed, swung, turned silvery-light and merged with the sky. Then the eye would discover them again.

"How many there are of them!" Pauline had come up to me. "Very different from the first year of the war." She was trying to hold a calm, normal tone.

"In a month it'll be the third year of war," said the colonel, and began counting the barrage balloons. . . . Sixty-two, sixty-three. . . How many have you counted?"

"I can't see very well," Pauline replied. "This work's spoiling my sight. We're starting a new process, it's drilling. . . My hands

¹ Nonsense, a trifle.

aren't very strong, and to get the work accurate I bend over, look at it close to, and that's bad for my eyes—they aren't too good to start with. But I like working at the factory. Of course, working on the collective farm was better for my health."

"You had to go to work?"

"I had to learn to work. But that's nothing. I can tackle anything."

I went home. Pauline and Sasha came in an hour later. The lieutenant opened the door to them, thrusting out his rosy, inquisitive face.

"Y-you," said the colonel as he passed him, and stammering slightly, "you're a swine. And if you go on telling lying t-tales, I'll . . . I'll show you something. . . P-please excuse me, Pauline, for making a row in your house. . . ."

The next day the lieutenant went back, and soon the colonel too came to say goodbye. He was without his bandage, and there was a heavy red scar round his eye.

And now came that third, astounding year of the war! No matter how long we live, it will not be long enough to tell even the main things of which we were the witnesses; never shall I forget those columns, columns, columns of lorries with their taut canvas covers that passed westward along the road. I was fascinated by that smooth, measured, unbroken stream. Trams and trolleybuses stopped to let them pass, while the passengers counted them: "A hundred and twenty-six . . . a hundred and sixty-six . . . a hundred and ninety-six. . . ." The compact, unbroken, monolithic torrent delighted everybody, and no one grumbled at the trams being delayed.

But there were other lines of lorries coming from the front, with shattered bodies, crumpled mudguards, and splintered glass. A hospital train passed our house. Everybody knew what the Kursk-Orel salient was, and now, when it was time for the communique, adults and children in all the apartments would run and call: "Hurry up, come quick, here's the communique. . . ." And when guns were seen passing along the Mozhaisk Highway early in the morning, on their way to the centre of the city, the boys would run home shouting that there was going to be a salute, and the adults would try to guess which of our towns the Red Army had taken from the Germans this time. The first trophies had already been set up in the Gorky Park of Culture and Rest—German weapons from the Kursk-Orel salient. The cinemas were already showing newsreels of the offensive.

Pauline, still more gaunt, stern, and with dulled hair, would listen to the roar of the artillery salute with tears in her eyes, her hands clasped to her breast as though trying to contain her emotions.

"Do you remember," she said, "how at the time when things were the worst, Dad said that we would see our army doing great things, but that it would cost us a heavy price? He was the first not to spare himself. And I would like to be doing the same as Dad, as Mitya, not sparing myself, and here we are busy all the time with petty, little things, we're just ordinary. Why is that?"

Now Sergeyev too had been promoted to lieutenant-colonel, and had been decorated

with the Order of Lenin for services during the battle of Kursk and Orel. His letters were more frequent, he asked for more news of the children, he was longing for them. He wrote nothing of his concussion—Pauline learned of that accidentally from an engineer in her husband's unit whom she met by chance. He said that the battery where Sergeyev had been during the battle could only be compared to hell; German planes had been bombing the guns, but the gun-crews had been unable to hear the whistle of falling bombs because of the roaring and thundering all round them! Somebody at home must be worrying so much about Sergeyev that they protected him. . . .

"I've stopped looking at things as I used to do," said Pauline firmly. "What can I know of the front? Or how a person feels when he comes out of that hell? Dad used to say that we should never forget: 'Twenty-five years is a quarter of a century! It's a period in history!' And we women should have gained something, something to help us live, in that time. And I want to understand my husband. But there's something that seems to be burning away inside me, as though my youth was leaving me. . . I feel that I'm still young enough in spirit, but I'm looking old. I can see that by the attitude of people about me, and sometimes it hurts me! But if only Mitya understands. . . ."

Trying to understand her husband, Pauline never hinted in her letters of the difficult time she was having. He himself increased her family allowance. Pauline was promoted to foreman, she sent the younger children to camp and Grandmother was issued with ration cards and settled down. Only Lida did not seem to improve in health. She had developed a bad form of anemia, she needed milk, fruit, butter, and it was no easy matter to get such things nowadays. But Pauline said resolutely:

"I'll pull her through!"

In the autumn a parcel arrived, so heavy that Pauline could hardly carry it from the post office. As she entered the apartment, she called:

"Children, come to the kitchen to open this—see what Uncle Sasha's sent us!" Feverishly she tore off the canvas covering, broke the lid open with an axe, and began taking out tinned food, condensed milk, chocolate, dates, nuts. She was beside herself.

"Heavens! But there's no end of it! How on earth? . . ." She was flushed, laughing, she talked loudly, called the two boys and shook out handfuls of nuts and dates for them onto a plate. Pauline was always like that—she always had to share her happiness. But the captain's wife, on seeing the gifts, remarked acidly:

"He doesn't send me parcels! Does anyone do that sort of thing for nothing?"

The next day she frowned with great disapproval when Pauline brought home a great bouquet of roses from the market.

"I just couldn't resist them!" said Pauline shamefacedly, as she arranged them in a vase. "I sold my last silk skirt. . . What do I need it for, anyway? I've got enough of the most important things to eat to last a long time,

and I did so want to celebrate! It's all Sasha's doing. . . ."

Now Pauline was able to buy Lida grapes, apples and liver, and the child's face took on colour visibly, while her percentage of haemoglobin rose, and rose again. . . . Galka and Lenchka came home from camp, plump, brown and boisterous. Grandmother felt that they had "got out of hand" during the summer, and decided that now it was her job to "give them the benefit of a lifetime of experience." She was very anxious to help her daughter, and Pauline realized this.

Busy as she was in the factory all day, and worried over Lida's health, she did not at first notice the signs of the new education. But as the children gradually became dull and subdued, this attracted Pauline's attention, and she tried to find another field of activity for Darya Romanovna in housekeeping and marketing. To everybody's surprise, Grandmother turned out to have a real knack for all sorts of combined operations, exchanging millet for potatoes, tinned meat for fresh, and flour for milk. Pauline had been very bad at bartering, but now, in Grandmother's capable hands, the family menu became much more varied. She ceased her "education" of Galka and Lenchka, and again children's voices rang out unhindered in the apartment. The boys snapped their fingers on the girls' heads, the girls came running to mother to complain, and everything was normal. In the evenings all gathered to listen while Pauline read them stories about Brer Rabbit or the story about the Golden Fish.

Then came the fourth year of war. Life was easier in one way, harder in another. German aircraft could no longer get to Moscow, and just as before the first bombings, Darya Romanovna would say: "But why should they come to Moscow now?"—with the significant addition of the word "now." And nobody contradicted her.

Nobody had any doubt that we were winning the war, and that kept everybody's spirits up; but the general weariness caused by hard work, anxiety and losses was very great, and the only reason why we did not feel it more was that we were carried along by the swift current of life. Now, looking back we could see better what had happened when the German armies broke into our country: on the one hand a heavy, inert, predatory force surging on us, on the other, a country arising *inspired*—that was surely the best description of our country—strong in the simple conviction: "our cause is just." We rose not only to defend the right to existence of the Russian state, which the enemy was trying to enslave—not for the first time; but also for the just cause of the young Soviet state. In the light of this, we could now see that just as our army, retreating, had preserved and even increased its strength for a future offensive—in the same way the evacuation of the factories when the German army was approaching Moscow, when lines of lorries loaded with oiled machines hastily covered with canvas had gathered opposite our house, had not only been the effort to save our industry. It had been an expression of the strength of the Soviet land, removing huge factories to a safe place so that they could work there

and put arms into the hands of the Red Army.

Ordinary people in the rear understood the war correctly, and most important, knew that each cell of that great body at the front was linked with a cell in the rear, from which it drew strength and energy, and that to sever front and rear into two parts would have meant to sever a living body. In those war years we were the witnesses of events outstanding in their grandeur, each one was no less than that which had gone before, while the foregoing remained undiminished, a heroic saga. Historic chapters emerged—"Crimea in the Furnace", "Stalingrad", "The Kursk-Orel Battle", "Leningrad", "The Liberation of Belorussia", "The Advance from the Vistula to the Oder", "The Battle of Berlin". And the notable thing was that Soviet people did not grow smaller, they lived freely among all these tremendous events, were their motive force; the Soviet individual was able to cope with them, and they were reflected as clearly in his life as in a drop of water. The heart of man accepted all around him more simply and easily, and during the war, the feeling for others' grief and happiness became finer, more sensitive. Although, of course, here too, there were also dull and unimaginative people insensible to this great tide of strength and energy sweeping over the country.

All this made it easier to live, but nevertheless, an existence constantly on the heights, agitated and alarmed not only for one's dear ones, but for many, many others who had become near and dear, this rarified mental and moral air we breathed, was exhausting. . . .

Pauline was more tired than any. She had become so thin that her dresses hung loosely from her shoulders. Her days were divided into three unequal parts—ten hours' work at the factory, an unlimited number of hours for household tasks—looking after the children, sewing, washing, cleaning the rooms; and a very small number of hours for rest. On her free days she would take the children to the zoo, or outside the town "to graze," and return tired but happy, her eyes shining but circled with dark hollows in her sunken face. She had no time at all to look after herself. Her pretty face was always framed in rough, disordered hair. She had always liked to keep her hair golden, but it was a long time now since she had been able to find the time to wash it with peroxide. "And what's the use? Why should I worry about my looks? My time's past," she said.

But one day all this changed. Working in my room, I heard Pauline's happy voice, speaking the most ordinary words: "May I come in?"

Pauline stood in the doorway, a length of light, golden material thrown over her shoulder, smiling, conscious that the colour suited her.

"Look at this," she said. "I've bought it to make myself a frock. It was rather expensive, but never mind, I can earn it, and Mitya'll soon be coming. But how good Sasha is! It's all because of his parcels that I'm able to spend money on myself."

All the evening she talked about Mitya. It was only late, when she was going to bed, that she said thoughtfully:

"But why is it that as long as we've been living together, it's never occurred to him that we need joy in our lives just as much as bread. . . He likes to see the children well fed and healthy, but. . . Oh, what rubbish am I talking? He may be in danger there, while I. . ." And she went into her own room while I reflected that Mitya was well protected from unfavourable comparisons!

All the neighbours on our staircase rejoiced with Pauline.

Then two more parcels came—from Sasha and from Mitya. And in early spring, Mitya himself arrived. He rang softly—nobody guessed who was at the door. It was only when Grandmother recognized him and cried: "Mitya!" that Pauline ran out, stopped in the entrance, stared, then suddenly seized him by the hand and dragged him into the room: "Look how they've grown! Just look. . ." Then she suddenly flung herself into his arms and hugged him, crying, not even giving him a chance to take off his greatcoat, while the children danced around crying: "Daddy, Daddy!"

I found an indescribable commotion in the home. The girls had pulled their father down onto the carpet. A happy, blissful smile covering the whole of his broad face, he would fish out first one daughter, then another, then the third, and hug them.

"Sasha told me that you were quite near," said Pauline, "and that you had concussion. And you never wrote me anything about it. And you didn't write that you've been promoted. You just sent that fool Kuzkin. . ."

Early next morning I found Pauline in the kitchen. She was standing by the refrigerator, and her delicate profile, the locks falling onto her neck, etched against the sky, reminded me of Pushkin's wife. Through the window the blue sky gleamed over the Lenin Hills again, and the last snow lay in the Poklonka yards, sunken and dark with dust. It had disappeared from the slope of the embankment, and the wet black earth stretched in a long dark ribbon. Pauline turned.

"You know," she said, "Mitya's not the same as he was! He's fond of the children, he's fond of me, but there's something in him that's different. Or perhaps it's myself? Nearly four years. . . It's a long time. I know—I'm ashamed to be thinking of love when so many families have lost people. But it's only now I've realized that to start family life again after the war won't be just taking it up where we stopped, not just picking up a happy life again at the point where the war broke it off. After all, each one of us has travelled a very long path, and we're meeting on it in front of all that's happened, not behind. We've got to find and lay a new, strong. . . But how can we lay anything that's better than what we had before?"

On the day of his departure, Sergeyev was shaving in his room when the captain's wife entered.

"You're going?" she said. "And is your comrade coming to take your place? We've seen three parcels from Sasha. . ."

He turned his lathered face.

"Get out of here!" he said.

"I shan't do anything of the kind!" she answered.

The colonel went up to her very quietly, took her by the shoulders, and turned to Pauline.

"What do you think, Pauline? Give her a lesson or not? No? Well, all right, then! Clear out, I tell you! When I get angry, you know, I'm pretty strong. . . and then—I've only got a few minutes left with my wife. . ." And he opened the door for her.

"That's what he said!" laughed Pauline in the evening, and added thoughtfully: "He's gone into some of the worst fighting. . . their unit's near Berlin."

Yes, our army had already sliced into Germany, halted on the Oder, gathered its forces, and on April 20th moved on Berlin. Colonel Sergeyev hastened back to the front with the ardour of a man whose job was "over there," and even though the advance and the outcome of the war could take place without him, he could not imagine himself outside that forward surge, could not exist far from it.

On the eve of his departure he had said to me:

"I can't regret that I never before knew such a coordinated unity, understanding and what I might call sharpened sense in myself, because such knowledge and understanding comes to a man only once in his life, when all his past has prepared him for carrying out the biggest job of all. During the war, there's something that's come out in all of us—something firm, something that can't be shattered. The hand of the people is raised, and I, one single cell in that hand, but thinking and feeling—I'm hurrying to my place."

And now the hand of the people descended! The war ended. It was amazing that life could still go on in the same way: people rose, washed, talked, worked. But nevertheless, life was already different—as though everybody, in their inner heart, heard the spring flight of the swallows over our boundless country. We could see it all, its rivers, its forests, its lakes, the faces of its people. It stretched from sea to sea, awaiting its children with their ploughs, hammers, axes and saws!

A message came right from Berlin—Colonel Sergeyev sent victory greetings to his family. On May 9th Sasha arrived. All put on their things to go out, to go to the centre; this was the great day, the only one, in everybody's life! "I'm going," said Pauline. Darya Romanovna was silent, and Pauline laughed: "Remember Polonsky's verse—'Only the old woman scolds when the neighbour comes, because I'm gay and merry with him. . . ' Is that it, Mummie?"

"No," replied Grandmother. "I was just thinking that Artem Ilyich would have gone with you too! . . ." She and Pauline embraced each other and some tears were shed. Then Pauline began to dress and drove everybody out of the room. Sasha sat in our room, asking: "What's she got in her head now?"

Pauline came out in her new frock, and stopped, looking rather shy. Her light locks lay low on the nape of her neck, and she looked very pretty. Sasha seemed afraid to look at her, in her lovely frock, but then, raising his head, he rejoiced.

"That's grand what you've done, Polly, just grand!"

It was easy to see how things were with

him—he felt as though she were a part of himself, and everything that she did was right.

"I did so want to please you," said Pauline, "you've helped me so much with your parcels."

"Oh, that just happened that way," Sasha replied. "We get very good supplies, and then they sent presents from the army trading organization. I didn't know what to do with them, so I told Vanyushka to send some parcels. . . ."

That was one story, but there was another, one that needed no words—that Sasha could not help thinking of Pauline when he was at the front, he knew her love for her children and her husband, but that not only did not prevent him from thinking of her, but seemed to bring him into the life of her family.

In the afternoon we were all in the centre of the city, among thousands of other gay, excited people filling the streets and squares.

Pauline was in the highest spirits. All the cares of life had slipped from her. Mitya was alive, the children were well. They were at home with Grandmother, clean and clothed. She could snatch a few hours for herself, and she wanted to dance, and did so, as soon as she was asked. During the previous few days her face had filled out, her hair was golden again, and she seemed to glow.

People walked about, danced, linked hands in dancing lines and circles, and joked. Pauline ate ice-cream, and Sasha tenderly watched how she bent forward to prevent any of it from falling on her clothes. His face was covered with an even tan, and the sunlight falling upon it from temple to cheek showed up the old scar above the right eye. He told us about the storming of Berlin, about the heroes, about his dead comrades, and his face reflected all that he told.

"There's something strange I feel," he said. "For me you're not just Pauline, Mitya's wife, a pretty, charming and well-dressed woman. In all the most difficult days of the war I seemed to see you there beside me, aged, with sandals on your bare feet, and I can't forget that Pauline in the one I see now, any more than I can forget my comrades who were killed. It's something in you that won't give

way to age, and it's that in you that I love."

She took his arm more and more often, and now men would ask his permission to invite her to dance, as though he had the right to permit or forbid it. And that made him happy. He released her, and received her back again.

We lost them on the Red Square.

They came home alone at three o'clock in the morning. Pauline opened the door with her own key. Sasha announced loudly: "It's us!" Pauline asked: "Are you all home?" A voice answered her from the other side of the captain's door, and we called from our room that we had been back two hours.

"Don't put the door on the latch," said Pauline. "We're going up onto the roof to look at happy, peacetime Moscow. Good night!"

The door of Pauline's room opened, and Darya Romanovna asked:

"Don't you want anything to eat? There's rissolos on the table."

"Lida hasn't got a temperature?" asked Pauline, and hearing that it was normal, she said:

"No, we're not hungry! We're going up!"

In the morning Sasha left for his home in Siberia. Pauline went to the station with him, and returned home tired and calm.

"Well, did he go?" asked Darya Romanovna.

"Yes, he's gone," she replied readily. "He's got a very good place—the upper berth. . . . He said he'll look out of the window all the way. He asked me to thank you, and kiss the children for him."

Then she went into her room, passed the children playing dominoes on the table, seemed to be looking for something, came out into the corridor and asked:

"Why does everything seem so empty?—Just as though something had finished, and we had to start life afresh. . . ."

I've read this story through, and the surprising thing is that it turns out to have been not four springs, but five! It happens that way, that time passes quicker than you think. And there's nothing you can do about it!

Translated by Eve Manning

NINA EMEL'YANOVA

THE SONG

The train was rolling westward. The engine breathed with a heavy intensity, and puff-balls of steam, tearing apart and scattering in ragged tufts, descended and lay upon the damp, dark earth of the fields. From the window one could see the dry, frost-stiffened tufts of grass by the railway racing swiftly back; the tall clumps of bushes, standing beyond the grass verge and the road one sensed beyond the embankment, also slid backward, but more slowly. Telegraph poles still further away seemed to hold their places, reluctant to move, but then they too slipped away following the grass and the bushes, while the high slope on the opposite side of a gully parallel with the line kept running forward, forward, as though trying

to keep up with the train, but that in its turn fell behind too.

A pale rayless sun hung over the fields, and the sky was veiled in thin, light clouds. At the stations women sold tomatoes, melons and pickled cucumbers.

I was travelling in a fourth-class coach with a group of Red Army men on their way from one front to another, just before the last battles of that year. The upper sleeping berths had been let down and hung close together; feet projected from them, some in white or blue socks, some bare, sprawling in sleep; the sound of the even breathing of sleepers filled the compartment. Down below, where the raising of the upper berths had left plenty of space, sat the men

who had already slept their fill. At the last station they had bought hard-boiled eggs, tomatoes and cucumbers, had filled their messins and flasks with boiling water, and now were making a meal.

Beside the wall near the window stood several Red Army men who had been left behind from their own train and had asked to be let in here. They had received a cold welcome—many had wanted to turn them out, and the question was still not finally settled.

"But we told you we were left behind. We ran all we could but the train was gone. . . ."

"Gone!" jeered a tall sergeant with a broad band on his khaki epaulettes and two yellow wound stripes. "Yes, and you need to be left behind, teach ye to use shank's pony. . . ."

"Fine bunch you are!" said one of the strangers, shrugging his shoulders. "Are we taking up too much space just standing here?"

"Came in as though they owned the place!" growled a man who had awakened on the upper berth. He swung his legs over the edge and began to put on his boots. "Asked nobody, just came in and settled down. . . . Don't you know the orders?"

"Maybe they were saying goodbye to their wives!" laughed another from up above.

"Well, and so what? Any of your business?"

"Our business all right! Soldiers, you call yourselves, you've got no idea of discipline! We ought to sling 'em out, comrades, that's all."

The men who had missed their train continued to defend themselves, the others continued to growl, and threaten to put them out, but I could feel that the whole thing was a matter of form and nobody was going to be put out. All that was required was that the newcomers should be made to feel their offence, because this coach held men from the front, and they had no use for carelessness, and no mind to accept these men as comrades.

"Haven't we had enough of it, comrades?" asked the senior sergeant, sitting down below. "The political officer gave them permission, said they could come on with us. So what business is it of yours?"

Even as he sat there with his elbows supported on a large kitbag, one could see that the sergeant was a tall man—probably taller than any of the others when he stood up. He looked about thirty years of age. He had a large nose with flaring, sharply-cut nostrils. His large, well-shaped hands, rough and dark, lay on his knees, the fingers moving as though in time to some music which he alone could hear.

"Vasya, call the lads, let's have a song, eh?" he said.

The sergeant, who had been neatly packing the remains of his bread and two tomatoes into a bag, silently tugged at a bare foot projecting from the upper berth.

"I'm getting my boots on! Stop pulling, damn you. . . ."

"How long can a man sleep?"

"Till he's sick of it!" came the reply. "That is, if there's time enough." He jumped

down, holding his topboots, pulled them on, then came up to the sergeant and asked for a light. The sergeant held out his lighter, and the two men rolled cigarettes and lighted up.

The men who had missed their train left the windows and seated themselves modestly on benches at the far end of the coach. Nobody showed any more interest in them, and one could feel that they themselves felt guilty, and awkward about travelling with a group not their own.

Meanwhile the men began to crowd into the compartment where the sergeant who had suggested a song was sitting—he was sometimes addressed as Matvei, sometimes as Klenkov. Two men lowered themselves from the top berths.

"What about a drink, boys," they said. "Where are you off to, Matvei?"

Klenkov had risen, and stooping under the berths, began gathering up the remains of his tomatoes and cucumbers; he handed his water bottle to one of the other men, then pulled down his faded, worn tunic. All his movements had a rhythm and masculine grace. Despite his great height and apparent angularity, he carried his huge body easily, and from the way in which the other men followed his movements and the expression of his face, it was easy to see that his prestige stood high.

While he was tidying up his corner, the sergeant and the soldier who had just donned his boots—both tall, well-built men—seated themselves on his bench. Klenkov came and sat down between them, threw out his arms as though about to take flight and then laid them round his comrades' shoulders.

"Well, what shall it be?" he asked, squeezing their shoulders, looking first at one, then at the other, then suddenly began singing: "The sea stretched far and wide. . . ."

He raised his head, and his large nose stood out arrogantly. With his raised arms he was like some great bird gazing at something on the horizon beyond the sea. He sang with a peculiarly, soft yet rolling voice, with a special intonation of his own, and so freely that singing seemed to come easier to him than speech. Somewhere beyond the coach walls he could see that wide sea with its steep racing waves, and over this sea the voice of man rolled out freely.

"And the wind. . . ." he bent his head as though boring through the tempest, his voice took a deeper note and then rose freely again. . . . "rages far, far away. . . . Comrades. . . ." he squeezed the shoulders of his friends sitting beside him, as though summoning them to some difficult task which must be achieved together, and the two of them, and with them the other voices in the coach, took up the song. . . . "our journey's a long one. . . ."

"You don't let anybody sleep," said the political officer, who had awakened at the other end of the coach, but added hastily: "Go on, don't stop. . . . I don't mean I'm wanting to sleep, but just that when you're singing, nobody can sleep."

But Klenkov, with a tender smile, conveying the idea that he knew what he was leaving on shore, concluded the song—

"From home and land far, far away. . . ."
"Eh, the land, our own homes!" he said quickly, as his comrades' voices died away. "Ah!" Then in a sad, hopeless, plaintive tone: "Comrades, my strength fails me, my watch I can't stand. . . ."

The door opened, the guard entered with a broom. He swept up the political officer's compartment, went into the next one, and approached the singers; he was thickset, square-built—even his unshaven face seemed square. The song was approaching its most dramatic part. Klenkov's features lay slack, his voice, soft and clear, did not ask, but sadly accepted the approaching, inevitable end. "He came up on deck, but he knew nothing more. . . ."

"Comrades, you've been eating seeds and scattering husks again," said the guard. "You don't worry about fines, and it's not part of my duty to sweep up every minute. What'll come out of it, anyway?"

"Sh . . . quiet," the men whispered to him, raising their feet or moving out into the corridor—if only he would hurry up with his sweeping and go.

But the song was broken off.

"Oh, goddam ye, had to come sweeping just now!" growled the singers.

"Let him get on with it," said Klenkov. "Each man's got his own job. We chew seeds, he sweeps up the husks."

"H'm, seeds," laughed the sergeant. "But tell me, what's your voice anyway, tenor or baritone?"

"God knows . . . just a voice!" Klenkov replied.

While the gruff guard was talking to the men who had missed their train, the song changed.

"On the border clouds are frowning. . . ." sang Klenkov. Now he was no longer like a bird. His arms still lay round his comrades' shoulders, but they lay heavily. He had an air of being reserved, dauntless, on guard, and he sang as though far away he could see a picture of that grim region where the country's guards stood constantly, never leaving their posts.

. . . Then suddenly, during the chorus, Klenkov stopped, his eyes flashing, he turned to the men who had missed their train and were standing listening to the song . . . called to somebody: "That's the way . . ." and began singing again. . . Then he stopped once more.

"Come and sit closer!" he called, and his eyes were blazing with a lust of battle, usually veiled, which we could all feel in that moment.

"The tanks raced on, the wind arose,

The menacing armour advanced. . . ."

His arms no longer simply lay on his comrades' shoulders, his heavy hands were bearing them down, swinging them forward and back in time to the song, with a wild, fighting strength.

From the group of latecomers sitting at the far end of the coach a short, insignificant-looking man detached himself, approached the singer and struck up in a wonderful high tenor:

"Three tankmen, three merry comrades. . . ."

The song ended. All wanted another—it could not stop at that.

"Eh, that song gets me all wrought up?" said Klenkov. "That's the way to send them all to the devil, off our land!"

"You're a tankman, are you?"

"No, I'm not, but what's the odds? . . . What did you keep quiet for when you all got in? Stood there without a word. . . . We'll sing together, know what we'll sing?"

"We'll have to be getting out soon. Our train isn't far ahead. We'll just wait for the station, and then we'll move over."

"Move over?" Klenkov repeated, taken aback. He rose, he wanted to do something to show his feeling for this man with the golden voice. "Sit down," he said, "here, beside me."

The sergeant moved over, making room for the musical talent which all had recognized at once.

"Well?" asked Klenkov. "We'll mark this meeting by singing—singing. . . . I know!" And in a gentle note he began a song about a girl. "Galya, my Galya" seemed to come tenderly, from his heart. The men leaned back, dreamily joining in the song.

"So!" said Klenkov, dropping his hands as he ended the song, "Galya, my Galya . . . far away is my Galya." Everybody knew that his family had been left far in the north. "A grand song! D'you know, I once nearly made a song myself! It's true! Only I couldn't find the right words for it. Kept humming and humming it to myself. . . ."

"What was it about?" asked Vasya.

"Everything, all sorts of things. . . . A fighting song. . . . Oh, hell, can't put into words. I'll get it done some day. . . ."

"The station's just coming," said somebody from above.

"No?! Another song?" And without waiting for a reply, he began. Several men jumped down from the berths, and the heaviest sleepers, finally awakened, peered down.

Klenkov had already extended his arms like wings, in his accustomed manner, but now this was a wild, free bird, an eagle or a falcon, flying in the wake of song, and one felt he was carried away by his voice. . . . He was gazing from a height on his boundless country, which had so recently been rich and flourishing—on the distant cottages of its villages, ravaged and burned by the enemy, at the mighty suffering and travail and fight of his people for their great, just cause, and that terrible, approaching, irresistible blow of our army which was to bring us victory! . . .

"Belching fire, bright with the gleam
of steel

Our tanks advance in furious attack. . . ."

High over the other voices, soared that of the new singer:

"When in the fight we're led by Comrade
Stalin. . . ."

Grey roofs flashed past the windows, a tall elevator, a water tower, a train standing on the next line. . . . The train slowed down.

But the song did not stop. . . . It rose with a menacing force, with the passion of men who know the meaning of battle and victory. Klenkov's wonderful voice led it, and when the train finally drew up the whole coach was singing, and the song reached out and spread over the broad plain.

Translated by Eve Manning

THE ROADSIDE MADONNA

The fortune of war brought us to S., a small provincial town in Poland.

Incidentally, at that time, when the Polish Republic extended no further than the Vistula and the capital was Lublin, the small, dirty little town of S. had risen to the rank of a large centre.

A low-hanging sky, nearly always grey, with ragged clouds racing by; the melancholy ringing of bells in the Catholic churches; decrepit cab drivers in their long coats with tin buttons and pimped drink-reddened noses sitting on the high box, brandishing long circus whips; furious gusts of wind tearing from the frozen bank of the Vistula to whine long and miserably among the ruins of bombed houses; grocers' shops with signboards: "Cosmos", "New Babylon", and windows filled with Moscow cigarettes, dried-up German boot polish and tiny composition crucifixes; the regimental band of the Polish Army, their brazen notes rending the evening air; the peeling walls of the Town Hall, unplastered since 1939, with passionate appeals from the Krajowa Rada Narodowa (National Home Council) about the confiscation of the landowners' estates; cobbled streets littered with straw from peasant carts and mottled with oil stains from the ZIS'es and Dodges making for the front; the traditional Sunday promenade of fashionable ladies in cork-soled shoes and cone- or mushroom-shaped hats, accompanied by local dandies with hunting jackets tightly drawn in at the waist, Chaplin moustaches, canes, and hypocritical smiles directed at the backs of the marching soldiers of the Dobrowski Division;¹ Anna Louise Strong, the grey-haired, enthusiastic American journalist, marching through this Polish hicktown, she who had seen much in her time, crying: "Poland is like Spain in the Civil War: Lublin is Valencia, Praga is Madrid. But here . . ." and she would spread out her hands, as though in apology—that was S. in 1944.

The commandant billeted us—Major D. and myself—on Pan Adam Borkowski, the local sausage king. His house was in the suburbs, and from the windows we could see the outskirts of the town, broad meadows, covered with the quickly melting Polish snow, a village on small hills, goats rambling among the clay-filled puddles, and the line of telegraph posts stretching to the front, to the Vistula.

Three roads joined at the very gate of the house—to Lublin, to Brest and to Warsaw, at that time in German hands.

At the fork of this noisy crossroads, tall as a Guards standard-bearer, stood a stone statue of the Madonna. This was the wayside goddess, Madonna Viatoria, the patroness

of travellers, the all-compassionate mother of the crossroads. The unknown sculptor has moulded her coarse, broad-nosed face in a languid, rather sad smile. Here no gorgeous liturgies were intoned, no cardinal or bishop sanctified the Madonna with his exalted presence. This was a goddess of the streets, loved by wandering traders, water carriers, street cobblers, chimneysweeps, and pick-pockets who preferred to confess their daily peccadillos at the feet of this plebeian Mother of God.

Graciously inclining her head, crowned with a mitre and slightly damaged by splinters from a hundred kilogram bomb, this Madonna of simple folks gazed affectionately at small schoolboys halting for a moment to pray for good marks in writing and arithmetic as they raced to school, at farm labourers tramping to Pan Borkowski's gate from Przesmykow; at well-fed boars; at theological students previously unable to complete their studies and now hastening to the newly-reopened theological faculty, their brown cassocks spattered with mud from the road, their snow-white jabots starched to a glassy smoothness; at fastidious young ladies returning to S. from a pilgrimage to Praga in Warsaw where they bartered manufactured goods for food and who stopped to lay a beautifully-made wreath of roadside flowers at the feet of the Holy Virgin.

All these travellers dropped the Lublin democratic government's *złoti* into the roomy mug fastened to the Madonna's stone mantle, and every evening the mug was emptied by a lay brother from the chapel of Prince Czartoryzky, of which this wayside goddess was a branch establishment. At her feet burned an undying lamp, and with the onset of darkness, the *miliciant*, the civil police constable, would take off his cap and after crossing himself, cover the lamp with a blue shade in accordance with the black-out regulations.

Beside the Madonna was a Military Highway post. Here stood a traffic regulator on point duty, usually Corporal Tatiana Sapozhkova, a tall Moscow girl with plump red cheeks like ripe apples. On her sturdy chest shone the Sevastopol and Stalingrad medals and the badge of the Moscow underground workers. Fiery curls strayed out from under her cap. Sometimes at night, when her electric torch battery was burned out, she would stoop down at the Madonna's feet and check the lorry drivers' blood- and oil-stained papers by the light of the undying flame.

There they stood side by side, these two rulers of the road, one in an ample stone mantle, the other in a canvas army cape. One day I drew Major D.'s attention to this quaint likeness, and it gave him material for one of his exquisite poems.

¹ Second division of the Polish Army formed in the U.S.S.R.

Pan Adam Borkowski's two-story house was crowded by his large and increasing family. Proud of their riches, the Borkowskis reckoned themselves among the "upper ten" of the town. Pan Adam, the family genius, was a short, thick-set gentleman with shaggy black brows and moustaches adorning a round face that wore a continual smile. That smile was rather after the Japanese style—a strained grimace of politeness, lending a benevolent expression behind which, we more than suspected, lay calculation, sentimentality and treachery. Our surmise was to a certain extent confirmed by rumours of the origin of Pan Borkowski's wealth; before the German occupation his house had belonged to a Jewish family.

The door frames still held gaping orifices where the "Mezuzah" had been torn out, the miniature caskets with extracts from the Torah, which among Jews play the part of sacred and even magical objects, bringing good fortune to the house. Now, there were tiny jasper crucifixes, and sculptured or engraved representations of the Ostrobran or Czestochowa Madonnas standing and hanging everywhere—all the trivial appurtenances of Polish Catholicism. The rest of the furnishings—plush tablecloths, soft pouffes, crocheted napkins and lithographs of the Genoa cemetery were impregnated with that lower middle-class philistinism that no ostentation can hide.

The sausage king's riches had grown considerably, strange as it might seem, during the war—with the aid of savings entrusted him by Jews driven into the Ghetto. Very few of these unfortunates were still alive—only those who had fled, or had been saved by the swiftness with which our tanks had cut into the German-held territory. These people, after their miraculous escape, would come to Pan Adam Borkowski to ask for their money.

Through the thin wall separating us from the family's apartments, we would hear heated arguments. Abuse would mingle with prayers. Then from the window we would see weeping people walking slowly away, showering biblical curses on our house. Pan Adam would stand at the door, trying to pass it off with a joke.

2

The Borkowski couple divided the manufacture and trading ends of the establishment between them. While Pan Adam was busy in his factory until far into the night, slipping and sliding among the squeals of dying swine, Pani Genowefa, sleeves rolled high on her full, muscular arms, flushed with zeal, would carry on the trade in their own shop in the centre of the town, not far from the Pilsudski memorial crowned with its plaster of Paris double-headed eagle.

The eldest daughter, Pani Irena, had at one time studied at the university, and had even dabbled in literature. At any rate, for one whole winter she had been a constant visitor at one of the Warsaw cafes where well-known writers and journalists met. Choosing a convenient table, she could feast her eyes on the poet T., and by straining her ears, hear one of the column writer S.'s

side-splitting paradoxes. But after having her thin, freckled face remodelled by a beauty specialist into a copy of the standard American film star, and marrying, she quietened down. Now she spent the day lying on a divan and studying life in high society from pre-war illustrated magazines.

Sometimes from beyond the wall, we would hear the inviting sounds of a mazurka: "In every poor boy lives a Polish soul." That meant that Dr. Jan Kopacz, Irena's husband, a lanky, noisy fellow, a typical peasant, had come from the front for meditations. His high spirits seemed to conceal a certain lack of real assurance. His mother had been an agricultural labourer in the Vilna region, and in the Borkowski house Kopacz's parents were never mentioned.

After a couple of glasses of vodka, the doctor would become expansive; he would come, knocking at our door, and in a confidential whisper lament long and tediously to his "Soviet comrades" that he had sold the "soul of a poor Polish lad" for the well-fed life of a sausage king's son-in-law.

Pan Adam was in the habit of complaining that he was unfortunate in his sons. The younger one, Ryszard, had seemed for a long time to be a quiet, obedient boy. But for some time now he had been grieving his parents. To be more exact—from the moment when the Soviet troops liberated S. The noble enthusiasm which seized upon all the Polish people at that time had swept Ryszard into the ranks of the Kościuszko division, which crossed the Bug together with the Red Army. After taking counsel with his wife, Pan Adam went to Lublin armed with a suitcase filled with banknotes and hams. Here he was able to have his son appointed driver to some commissary colonel. However, Ryszard very soon had enough of running about in safety in the noisy Lublin streets, and had himself transferred to the front. He became one of the boldest scouts in his company and finally drove his old father to distraction by joining the Polish Socialist Party.

The elder son Fabiusz, the "crown prince", had long been given up for lost. His portrait hung in the old nursery—a thin face with a clear, high forehead; eyes gazing fanatically, modestly, sadly into the distance; the bold yet tender lines of a youthful mouth.

We were told the story of Fabiusz. The war had caught him in Warsaw. With the thoughtlessness of youth, he had gone to fight on the barricades. Like many millions of Poles, he had waited vainly for aid from England. That help did not come. Fabiusz was taken prisoner. The Germans sent him to the Oświęcim prison. After huge bribes to German officials and Polish renegades, Pan Adam was able to make his way to the Oświęcim district, where he learned that Fabiusz had been transferred to Buchenwald, then to Mauthausen, from there somewhere else, and all trace of him had been lost in the innumerable death camps which studded the territory administered by the governor-general of Poland, Wartenland and the Old Reich. Since that time, for five years, daily masses had been sung for Fabiusz in the St. Stanislaw Church in S. Pan Adam

never removed the black band from his sleeve, even when slaughtering pigs in the small abattoir by his factory.

However, Fabiusz's story was not ended, and we were fated to be the witnesses of its sequel. Fabiusz was alive, and returned to S.

3

The former nursery was now occupied by the traffic regulators. Corporal Sapozhkova, in command, kept the place in apple-pie order, feeling that the honour of the Red Army abroad was involved. Nothing was ever moved. Tommy guns hung over the bed, on the wall the corporal had fastened a portrait of Stalin, and in the corner lay a pile of dumb-bells with which the young athlete did her daily dozen every morning.

Pan Borkowski was quite well pleased to have the military billeted in his house. Nights were disturbing in S. Scattered firing would suddenly break out in the streets. A terrible hammering would shake the gates. With trembling hands the sausage king would open them. In the crack he would see the barrel of a Winchester and a crafty face with a Chaplin moustache. A baritone breathing menace and alcohol would announce:

"We are the flying column from the National Armed Forces of the Home Army. . . Here's an order to receive five thousand zloti from Pan Borkowski. Kindly pay it in big bills, so that it won't take too long to count. We are in a hurry. . ."

In the morning the millionaire would complain to me:

"Actually, I pay two sets of taxes—one to the official government in Lublin, the other secretly to the government in London. Get me coming and going, if the gentlemen will excuse me."

At that time a small band, calling itself a "division of the Home Army" was wandering about in the forests round Medzyzecz and Biala Podlaska, that Mecca of the Akovites¹. The military tactics of this "division" consisted of shots from behind corners and blackmail by night. If chance offered, the Akovites were not averse to killing some person active in the trade unions, or a democratically-minded priest careless enough to return home in the late hours of the night from a deathbed. Each of their "special actions" they reported to London by a secret radio, describing these murders as noble and patriotic exploits.

Sometimes before going to bed, Major D. and I, feeling the need for exercise, would take a walk through the nocturnal streets of S. We would traverse the darkness of this foreign town, discussing the latest number of the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* received at the front. Our voices would ring loudly in the empty streets. Criticism of some provincial Almanac would start us arguing, we would be carried away, interrupting each other, resticulating with hands that nevertheless held a revolver—just in case. The wind from the Vistula would be whistling through the ruins. A shot would sound from one of

the side streets leading onto Pulawski Street. Vague shadows would glide into doorways. Military police from the commandant's headquarters would chase deserters. Pleasantly refreshed by our literary discussion, we would return home.

At that time there was a lull at the front. For some months it had remained static along the Vistula. The annual Artillery Day had been celebrated with all due pomp and ceremony, and one might have thought that all the energy there had gone into preparing the exhibition by soldier-artists in the old Minsk-Mazowiecki barracks. Some of the etchings and water colours would have done honour to any European gallery. But these efforts were not wasted; scouts reported that the Germans had begun to incline to the view that the Russians had gone over to positional warfare, probably considering the German defences to be impregnable. Marshal Georgi Zhukov strengthened this German impression by the skillful use of misinformation, while at the same time, with his characteristic ruthless thoroughness, preparing his tremendous January blow. Feigned troop movements purposely badly covered, finally deceived the German spies.

About this time winter finally set in with almost Russian severity. Firm ice covered the Vistula, and snow heaped up on the tiny footholds beyond it, which we had gnawed out from the German defences. It was on one of these pitch-dark January nights that Fabiusz suddenly appeared.

Together with two Russian airmen he had fled from the death camp. Moving by night, they had passed through Brandenburg, and had managed to slip through the front lines. On seeing Fabiusz's pale face and hearing his confused speech, the scouts decided that he was "touched", and possibly the torments which the young Pole had suffered in the fascist prisons really had affected his reason. Fabiusz was sent to the village of Z., where units of the 2nd Polish Army were stationed at the time.

Here he found an old friend—Jerzy Zwolinski, the regimental priest, a lively young fellow who had previously played halfback in the Polonia football team, and the brother of Zosia Zwolinski, whom rumour had once named Fabiusz's fiancée.

Jerzy gave his friend his own bed, but an hour later he awakened him with many apologies—the unit had received orders to advance. This was on January 13th, 1945.

Fabiusz immediately announced that he wished to join the army, but the doctors whom Zwolinski had summoned found him too weak. In the end they agreed that he should go home to rest for a few days.

"You'll catch up with us on the road to Berlin," said the merry young priest.

Fabiusz was supplied with papers and found a place in the back of a lorry taking old tyres to the rear, to the east. Pitying the sick youth, a lieutenant gave up his place in the driver's cabin to him.

At the end of the day the lorry had jolted as far as Kataszyna, where Fabiusz had to get out. It was going no further.

Fabiusz stood on the edge of the Warsaw

¹ From the letters A.K.—Armja Krajowa (Home Army).

road. Traffic was heavy, but it was all going westward, to the front. After waiting for half an hour, and getting chilled through, Fabiusz went to the highroad guardhouse. The corporal on duty, a young fellow with a shrewd, care-worn face, shook his head decisively.

"Where are you coming from?" he asked in a fantastic mixture of Russian and Polish, and after glancing through Fabiusz's papers, added: "Won't be any lorries going to S. You can see for yourself—everything's making for the Vistula." And he laughed gaily.

Fabiusz continued on foot. After all, it was not more than thirty kilometres to S. And it was impossible that not one lorry going his way would pass him on the road, with such heavy traffic!

Fabiusz was feeling pretty good. He had one of those strange sudden spurts of energy which sometimes come in the midst of the greatest fatigue, and are one of its symptoms. He kept picturing his homecoming. His father would come to meet him with the familiar subtle smile; in the usual polite tone which Dad never changed even when speaking to beggars, he would say: "I apologize most deeply to you, Sir, but I can do nothing . . ." then without coming to an end of the sentence, he would suddenly cry: "Holy Virgin, Queen of Poland . . . it's Fabiusz! . . ." And on hearing the cry they would all come running—Mum, and Irena, and that boy Ryszard, Dr. Yan, Aunt Kazimierz, and the workers from the abattoir; there would be laughter, tears, a hot bath with pine balls, disconnected happy talk, clean underwear, prayers, a suckling pig, sweet sleep in his own warm home. . . .

Enjoying these dreams, Fabiusz walked on, inclining his shaggy head against the wind. It came in fitful gusts, now in his face, now at his back, now from the side. But it never left him in peace. Whirling clouds of snow rose from the fields bordering the road. Fabiusz was afraid to halt for a moment, lest he freeze, so he walked on without stopping. His legs were cold and stiff as ice, but his head was burning.

Then a minor calamity happened: the old boots which a compassionate Russian soldier had given Fabiusz the previous evening near Pulawy started to fall to pieces—the soles were leaking badly. But Fabiusz did not lose courage. Whatever happened, he was walking on his native soil, and everything about him—the wind, the frozen snow under his feet, the blue dusk and the fat crows flying under the low skies—all this was Poland, his own, free Poland.

Night fell. The traffic along the highway increased. Sometimes lights would flash for a moment, and he would see the reddish gleam of the frozen road and the whirling snowflakes.

The lorries were moving in two and even three columns. And all going the other way, to the west. Fabiusz turned into the ditch and walked ankle-deep in snow. Sometimes he fell, but rose again and went on towards S., to the east. He could hear the voices of the soldiers from beneath the tarpaulin covers, the horns, the roar of the engines, like the impatient whinneying of horses.

If Fabiusz had not been so weary, almost senseless with exhaustion, he would have thought what this tremendous nocturnal current westward meant, and perhaps his fiery nature would have drawn him too to the west.

But his inflamed mind could think of nothing else now except the one thing—not to stop. To halt—would mean death. And he walked on, while the blood oozed from his lacerated feet, froze into crimson ice needles and drew the skin painfully.

Sometimes he felt as though he had been walking for many days along that endless snow beside the never-ceasing stream of hot, snorting lorries. And then suddenly it would seem that he had only just started, that he was full of strength and nothing pained him—and in the same moment he would realize that he was not walking at all, but lying down, softly bedded on downy snow. And he would rise and go on.

Suddenly he became frightened; he had the illusion that he was not walking, that it was only the lorries sweeping up to meet him, lorry after lorry, while he was standing still. Long and carefully he studied his own legs, and finally saw that they really were moving. He was simply unable to feel them. Still not believing, he looked back and saw the tracks which his feet had left in the snow. Then he became calmer and went on, to the east, homeward.

4

At last he was stopped by a patrol of Polish military police. While one of them checked his papers, the other one supported him, lest he fall.

"You'll freeze, friend, come into our guardhouse, warm up. You want to know how far it is to S.? There it is!" said the man and raised the barrier.

"Saved," whispered Fabiusz.

He was by his father's house. The thought gave him new strength. He shook the gate, and the old iron replied with a friendly screech. He knocked for a long time. Squeals sounded from inside the yard—Father must be killing pigs—he liked to do that job at night. Then a dog barked.

"Topsy! Topsy!" Fabiusz called to it.

He felt as though he were shouting at the top of his voice, but actually only a whisper came. Again he began to knock. It was difficult, his hand would not obey him. He had to rest, gather his strength, and then knock again.

Finally footsteps sounded from inside the yard, and Fabiusz heard a voice—a soft bass, with polite inflections.

Fabiusz wept with joy. His swollen tongue tried to articulate the words: "Dad, it's I, your Fabiusz. . . ." But instead of words, all that came from his frozen throat was a rasping cry.

On the other side of the door his father, coughing politely, grumbled gently that only yesterday he had had the pleasure of conveying a considerable sum for patriotic needs, of which he had a formal receipt, and that it would be better if the gentlemen, terrorists came for financial discussions sober, and that in any case they would talk

tomorrow during the day, and that for the present he wished the gentlemen terrorists a very good night and bowed to them—and it may be that in the nocturnal darkness on the other side of the gate he really did bow. Then Fabiusz heard his receding footsteps and polite cough.

For a long time Fabiusz continued beating at the gate. He knew that he was perishing. He summoned his last strength and crossed the road. There stood the house belonging to his rich aunt Pani Kazimierz Borkowski. It had long been known that she passed the night in prayer. She had her own chapel in the house, and she always had her own private chaplain living with her, usually not too advanced in years.

Fabiusz did not have to knock long here—the response came with miraculous alacrity. True, the door was not opened, but two voices, a man's and a woman's, were heard singing *Te Deum Laudamus* by the entry with angelic purity and sweetness. Fabiusz was frantic, he shook the gate, shouted hoarsely, groaned, swore, but the only reply was *Te Deum Laudamus*, and nothing more.

He dragged himself along the street and began knocking at one door after the other. All the people living here were friends or relatives. Here was Pan Lowejko's house, his father's partner. That one, standing in its garden, belonged to Pan Penksna, a beaming old gentleman with a childlike, rosy face framed in a neatly clipped white beard, owner of a shop for church accessories, which always smelt sweetly of dried cypress. And there was the house belonging to Captain Martcinek, an old Legionary—there were the two alabaster lions on either side of the door with their greasy backs onto which he had always clambered as a schoolboy, whereupon the captain would thrust his red face with its hanging moustaches out of the storm pane and sputter curses, so that all the schoolboys learned their worst words from him. And here was Pan Zwolinski's house—Fabiusz had once been in love with his younger daughter, Zosia, and had declared his love at a New Year ball in the Ursuline Sisters' high school. And further on—the Brzeziński's house, the Sienkowski's, the Szybiński's, the Taczański's. At most of the houses nobody replied to Fabiusz's knocking, at others somebody assured him from the other side of the door that some money or other would be brought to somebody or other tomorrow, at others they threatened to set the dogs on him. . . .

5

The wind died down. The snow ceased. The moon even came up, lending a magical, enchanted gleam to everything around. Suddenly Fabiusz saw something astounding, something that nobody in Europe had seen for five years; in the dead of the night, all the windows were alight in a large house not far away. Shining rectangles were reflected on the snow. And there was even music—flutes and violins, a vague, tender melody.

A wild idea flashed through the youth's mind—the war had ended, the Germans had surrendered! And somebody was giving a ball in honour of the end of the war. Fabiusz's

eyes ranged along the street. The other houses were all dark. Evidently, nobody knew about it there.

He went towards the lighted house, sometimes falling weakly onto the dirty snow churned up by the lorries hastening forwards. Then he would rise again and move obstinately towards the festively lighted house.

But when he got as far as the middle of the road, the lights suddenly disappeared. Before Fabiusz stood a dark, charred ruin with a fallen roof and holes in the wall. Alas, it had all been the moon's deception! Through the gaping roof it had filled the house with magic rays. And there was no music, only the wind whining through the tumbling walls. Fabiusz turned to the moon and threatened it with a trembling fist. It took cover behind a cloud, shook down snow from it, and everything became dim and confused.

But nevertheless, in the darkness Fabiusz saw a figure. It was standing over him, motionless, black against the grey sky which even on the darkest night is nevertheless lighter than the earth. Fabiusz felt that there was something familiar in the lines of this figure—the slanting shoulders, the bent head, the heavy flowing folds about the ample body. Fabiusz recognized it—Madonna! Madonna Viatoria, the patroness of travellers, the gracious mother of those passing the crossroads!

From his childhood Fabiusz had been accustomed to seeing her on this spot. At one time the kindly goddess had been well-disposed to him. He had had no difficulty in persuading her to grant him victory in street fights and generous presents from his parents for New Year's Eve, and birthdays. She had willingly concealed his boyish sins—the theft of a sausage ring from his father's factory, a well-aimed shot from an air-gun, which had broken a neighbour's window.

Later, as he grew up, Fabiusz had scorned the Madonna. But perhaps she had not forgotten him, all the same? After all, he had not perished on the road, no fascist bullet had found him in battle, German whips had not lashed him in prison and he had made his way to his father's house. But here, evidently, the protection of the All-Powerful had ended. After reaching his father's house, he was dying on its threshold. With difficulty he drew air into his frozen lungs.

He dragged himself to the Virgin's feet, he collapsed with his head on her sandal and began to pray. These were no studied prayers from the Missal, no, he prayed in his own words as he had done as a child when his faith had been ardent and unquestioning.

"Dost thou remember me, Holy One? It is I, your Fabiusz. You see I've come back. They didn't know me. But you knew me. They didn't let me in, into their warm houses. But you can warm me with heavenly fire. *Salvum fac Fabium!* Or if I am not to live, then I will die here, at your holy feet. Forgive me, Queen of Heaven. I have nothing to bring you. I have no money. I bring you the only thing I have left, my life. I have very little of it left, only a tiny scrap. Take it. . . ."

Thus he stammered, pressing his lips to the feet of the Madonna of the Crossroads as travellers do when they are on a long journey.

Suddenly he felt that the feet of the goddess were moving. Yes, they stirred, as though they were trying to free themselves from Fabiusz's embrace. In superstitious terror he raised his head.

And he saw a miracle: the statue was slowly stooping down to him. Religious awe filled Fabiusz. "Am I dead already?" . . . But everything about him was as usual. It could not be that in heaven there could be the same dirty snow on the road, the stench of petrol in the air, and the squeal of pigs from the opposite house. "No, I'm alive! . . ." Tears of rapture fell from Fabiusz's eyes and froze on his lashes.

The miracle continued. The Madonna opened her stone mantle and Fabiusz felt two hands, filled with supernatural strength, raise him and bear him lightly away. It seemed to him that he was floating above the earth. The gate of his father's house opened before the statue, just as though she had had a key to it.

Fabiusz found himself in a large, light room. Looking about him, he recognized it as the old nursery. The vision approached him, floating along as though not touching the floor. It was weird to see the Madonna among the commonplace furniture—stools, washstands. She was like a living person, he could almost see the blood pulsing under the skin of her face. Only the golden halo about her head recalled her holiness. Some more beings floated around her—evidently a choir of angels who had come down from heaven to form her suite of seraphs. In melodic voices these celestial figures spoke in a language which Fabiusz did not understand, but he found that quite natural—how could he, a mortal, hope to understand the language of the heavens.

The next day he awakened to see his whole family around him. Dr. Jan Kopacz, who was frowning portentously, was taking his pulse. The room was crowded with relatives and friends, all waiting tremulously for the moment when he would awake. Nobody could understand how he had come here. And there was nobody to ask, because the army traffic regulators, who had occupied this room, had suddenly left for the front late the previous night, without even having time to inform the master of the house. It was that unforgettable day, January 14th, 1945, when the whole Belorussian front moved forward in its great advance through Poland to the Oder.

When he saw Fabiusz open his eyes, Pan Adam dissolved in tears. All rushed to the head of the youth's bed. In a weak voice he told his saga. When Fabiusz recalled the Red Army man who had given him the old boots, the sausage king cried that he would order prayers for the kind-hearted Russian unknown. The description of how Fabiusz had beaten the gate unavailingly brought forth fresh streams of tears from his listeners.

"Old fool that I am!" cried Pan Adam, beating his breast. "But tell me, beloved son, who opened the gate to you?"

Fabiusz's face twitched. Silence fell in the room.

"She did . . ." he whispered at last, and stretched out his arm to point through the window.

All looked out, and saw the statue of the Wayside Madonna standing at the crossroads. She looked the same as ever. Shining snow sparkled on her graciously inclined head, and an innocent bird hopping over her had left cruciform prints on her mantle. The only thing new about the Madonna was that she was now alone. For the first time in many days, the Red Army Corporal Sapozhkova was not standing beside her in her canvas cloak, efficiently directing the traffic with her signal flags.

Fabiusz told his awe-struck family of the miracle that had happened to him. For some seconds reverent silence reigned in the room. Then the listeners were overcome by a sort of religious ecstasy. Pan Adam announced that it was not by chance that the Borkowski family had been singled out for this mark of divine favour, but in recognition of its good deeds, the most lofty of which was the patriotism of its members and the commercial honesty of the firm. Pani Kazimierz cried that she would communicate this happening to the Holy See. Her companion, the tall chaplain, expressed his conviction that the Cure in Rome would undoubtedly recognize the authenticity of the miracle for the glory of the Lord, for the salvation of souls and the flowering of faith. Old Pan Penksna vowed to place an order with the best sculptor in C., for miniature figures of the Wayside Madonna carved in ivory, a commodity of which he had a large stock and had been holding over for better times.

Only Dr. Jan Kopacz remained silent. Then, coughing, he remarked:

"But it seems to me, panowie, that I might be able to explain it more, shall we say. . . ."

But the doctor quailed and fell silent under the menacing glare of the sausage king. Later on, leaving the dining room, he took two glasses of vodka and ran up to the first floor where Major D. and I lived, to pour out his free-thinker's scepticism to his "Russian comrades."

But he did not find us. We too had left during the night with the advancing army. On January 17th we crossed the Vistula on an armoured truck and entered liberated Warsaw. On Saxonplatz, Corporal Sapozhkova was standing on a pile of bricks directing the traffic with her usual efficient ease. We saw her along the whole line of the advance—in Lodz, in Kutno, and in burning Poznan. And later, in the spring, we saw her beyond the Oder among the appalling ruins of Küstrin, in Frankfurt, in Landsberg, in Maltzdorf. And finally, she appeared for the last time on May 2nd in Berlin. In all her statuesque might the corporal stood commandingly on Alexanderplatz, and the hundreds of shabby Germans crowding the pavements never wearied of staring respectfully at the authoritative swing of her powerful arms as she skillfully sorted out the streams of army lorries running along the bombed streets of the German capital, while hundreds of kilometres away, beneath a low, ever-grey sky, a group of Babbits around the Wayside Madonna praised the miracle which had been accorded the virtuous firm of the sausage manufacturer.

Translated by Eve Manning

LIFE OF THE STONE

The late Academician A. E. Fersman was a noted Soviet mineralogist and the author of several books on mineralogy and crystallography. His *Popular Mineralogy*, *Some Reminiscences of Stones*, and *Gem-Stones*, are among the finest examples of Soviet popular science literature.

Sudden death cut off this eminent scientist in his prime, leaving a number of scientific works and popular writings unfinished. Among these was a large work entitled *Story of the Stone in the History of Civilization*, extracts from which as well as from several other of the scientist's popular works we publish below.

I should like to lure the reader away with me to the world of gems and introduce him to the fabulous wealth of precious and semi-precious stones our great country possesses. I should like to bring the crude, at first sight unprepossessing material, out of the earth into the light of day so that its beauty might delight our perceptions.

I first took an interest in gem-stones some 30 years ago when my work took me to the distant island of Elba. For many years thereafter diamonds were my major preoccupation. Thousands upon thousands of these beautiful stones passed through my hands at that period. In search of rare specimens I visited the biggest diamond merchants in the world and heaps of sparkling stones from South Africa and the eastern shores of the Atlantic were spread before me on the expanses of baize-covered tables.

The far-reaching problems of crystallography led me to a study of other precious stones, the gems of Uruguay and Brazil, of India and Indo-China.

I scrutinized thousands of kilograms of the rarest stones in the town of Iddara in the valley of the Rhine, and in the warehouses and on the turntables of hundreds of tiny lapidary establishments in central France. For nearly 20 years after that I devoted my attention to the stones that are found in the soil of the Altai, the Transbaikalian area and the Ural Mountains.

The October Revolution posed new tasks before gem scholars and beginning with 1919 my time was divided between the Peterhof lapidary establishment and the polishing mill in old Yekaterinburg where I watched the skillful work of the stonecutters and traced the minutest, barely perceptible features of each stone.

I saw chunks of jasper come to life in the hands of skilled craftsmen in Peterhof, saw the facets of magnificent emeralds emerge from a fragment of natural green crystal.

In the village of Berezhovsk I spent nights at a time watching the nimble fingers of the grinders at their lathes, turning pebbles of rock crystal into beads of topaz for necklaces.

Many a memorable day I spent among the gems in the palaces of Leningrad's environs, and the detailed descriptions of the wonderful room in the Catherine Palace in Pushkin or the Pavlov Palace in Slutsk helped me un-

derstand the history of Russian precious stones.

In the vaults of the Armory, behind thousands of cases filled with the property of the Royal Household, the chests containing the crown jewels and tsarist regalia were found after the Revolution. I spent the better part of three years studying these gems which formed what are now the State Jewels of the U.S.S.R.

The famous collections of gems of the Saxons on Kurfürsten and kings in Dresden, which I had formerly admired so much, paled into insignificance beside these superb objects accumulated over a period of one and a half centuries in the treasure-houses of the Russian tsars. Not even the remains of the remarkable treasures of the French throne on display in Louvre, nor yet the famous collection in the Tower in London, however lovely the deep blue sapphires from Ceylon, the dark stones of Kashmir or the wonderful emeralds from the ancient temples of Colombia, could compare with them.

A study of our State Jewels proved to me once again how complex are the laws governing the nature and origin of gem-stones, and the important role they play in the life of men.

In our country this splendid material is finding ever wider application. Already today, in the columns of the Kiev Station of the Moscow subway, with its exquisite Armenian marble onyx and the Mayakovsky Square station with its delicate pink Urals hornstone, we can see the future that awaits our gems, marbles and other colourful stones in the development of the Land of Socialism.

And I realized that one can no longer approach the stones as did the authors of old books on gems, that their very names, borrowed from other languages—from the French, English and Italian—were an embodiment of a false conception of the role of gem-stones. Indeed, eminent experts avoided the term "precious stones," preferring to call them "gems" both in their scientific treatises and poetic works. The word "gem" found its way into technical books on the subject although in ancient Rome the original meaning of the Latin word *gemma* was an engraved stone.

With the growth and development of human culture, words and terminology change

to keep in step with the formation of the new world outlook. Thus, in our country where sheer luxury and the accumulation of riches for personal aggrandizement are scorned, the term "precious stone" is an obsolete conception. For us gem-stones are wondrous gifts of the earth in which the remarkable laws governing crystals and their structure, the laws of matter itself, have found vivid and harmonious expression.

STATE JEWELS OF THE U.S.S.R.

The origin of the State Jewel Fund dates back to the 40's of the 18th century. Its first items are distinguished for the elegance of style and conception and for their exquisite workmanship. The jeweller of that time was an artist, who eschewed the mechanical approach of the artisan. *Objets d'art* dating back to the second half of the 18th century are similarly notable for unsurpassed beauty of form and colour.

As time passed, lines grew simpler, baroque and rococo were gradually supplanted by less ornate and more symmetrical design and the glow of the coloured stone yielded to the blaze of the diamond—not the small stones of old India, nor the sparkling stone of Brazil, but veritable cascades of brilliants, rose-cut diamonds and great solitaires of the rarest beauty and size. The simple but beautiful object of the mid-century whose less valuable stone the lapidary contrived to transform into a work of art, was ousted by rich, magnificent ornaments, dazzling arrays of blazing, shimmering gems.

The albums of the State Jewels take us far back into the centuries, revealing to us the secrets of the jewellers' craft in those distant times. Catherine II accumulated a vast store of jewels and the Russian Court was served by a whole galaxy of famous jewellers beginning with Posier and Louis David Duval who created works that have gone down in history, immortalizing their name and talent in the treasures of the State Jewels. At the same time, in her desire to satisfy her vanity and outdo everyone else in the adornment of her person and her surroundings, Catherine, followed by all the aristocracy, turned to Russian gem-stones. Expeditions were sent to the Urals and Siberia to search for gems and coloured stones. Palaces were decorated with Russian marble and jasper. All this was achieved at the cost of the hard labour of the serfs and by ruthless taxation. And the more the people toiled and suffered the richer waxed the imperial treasure house.

The 19th century opened and the old traditions collapsed, but the former splendour of the court of Catherine lingered in the brilliance of precious stones, gold and silver. Then art fell into a decline, and crude commercialism began to supplant the patronage formerly accorded by the wealthy to the jeweller's craft. Under Alexander II this decline in beauty and style reached its lowest ebb. Less stones were bought and when they were acquired it was only for commercial or perhaps political considerations.

Throughout the 19th century this decline in the jeweller's art and neglect of the State

Jewels continued. Splendid old 18th-century stones were ruthlessly recut and reset at the whim of the Empress for a single ball or masquerade; stones of historical value were torn from their settings overnight and hastily strung on silver threads for some novel gewgaw.

And while many of the former jewels were relentlessly destroyed, the new bore the imprint of stolid German taste revealing a barrenness of style and a lack of artistic feeling.

An important aspect to be noted in tracing the history of the State Jewels is the almost complete absence of Russian stones. Where are the purple amethysts that lit up at night with a crimson glow for which Catherine II sent expeditions to the Urals? Where is the cherry-coloured tourmaline, fabulously beautiful by day but lifeless under lamplight, that was the talk of the academies at the end of the 18th century and to wear which was regarded a symbol of love for one's country? And where, finally, is the much-admired Alexandrite, the Russian emerald?

Archives supply the answer: the tsars did not appreciate Russian gem-stones. Many historical stones and *objets d'art* made of Russian stones were lost and many were auctioned off for a song. In 1906 the Treasury sold more than a million gold rubles' worth of stones, among them rare Russian emeralds, old amethysts dating back to Catherine II's time, and many other gems of whose historical, scientific and even material value "His Majesty's Chancellery" was either unaware or which perhaps it deliberately ignored.

In 1719 Peter the Great drew up the first regulations concerning the safekeeping of articles of value belonging to the state including the royal regalia. Gradually Peter's idea was extended to cover other valuables as well and a special department was set up at the Treasury to provide for the custody of treasures belonging to the tsar including state regalia. Subsequently, this department was charged likewise with supervising the acquisition of gold, diamonds and other valuables, as well as the dispatch of valuable gifts, bestowed upon foreign ambassadors (with a view to establishing good relations with the states they represented), officers of foreign armies, foreign princes, etc. The value of such presents ran to as much as 2,000,000 rubles a year. Hence it is clear that the department's main concern was not so much the safekeeping of the crown jewels as the manufacture and purchase of diverse gems for distribution as royal gifts.

After the fire of 1737 in the Winter Palace, the crown jewels and other valuables were removed from the palace and deposited in special safes. A vault for diamond jewellery was established. This was the origin of the "diamond room" where all historical treasures were stored. It was guarded by sentries detailed by a regiment of the guards, and the seals of the safes were entrusted to one of the cabinet ministers and one of the ladies-in-waiting.

In July 1914, the gold and jewels were removed from the diamond room, hastily packed into eight chests without any written record and shipped under seal by special train to Moscow where they were installed in

the Armory. Only in April, 1922 were the chests opened by a special commission and a detailed scientific study and registration of the former crown jewels begun under my guidance. This was the origin of the State Jewels of the U.S.S.R., a collection which contains over 400 items of great artistic value and which is steadily growing.

A SEA OF FLAME AND COLOUR

In the first century A. D. Pliny said of the diamond: "Of all human possessions, not alone precious stones, the diamond has the greatest value. For a long time it was known only to kings and then but to a few. Like gold it was found in mines as the rare companion of gold, and indeed, seemed to be born of gold."

All known diamond deposits are represented in the State Jewels. Here you find Brazilian stones dating to the middle of the 18th century and South African items relating to the end of the 19th century. Here too are Russian stones found in 1838 on the Kushaika River in the Urals.

I shall not discuss all the treasures of the Fund, which amount to more than 25,000 carats in diamonds. I shall merely mention the most famous stones, such as the Orlov Diamond, weighing 194.75 carats; the Shah Diamond, an 88.7-carat stone of Indian origin; the eight-faceted diamond in Catherine II's grand crown, about 57 carats; a solitaire weighing about 55 carats; a 47-carat rose-cut diamond of Indian workmanship with a bluish tint, and a 40-carat bracelet also made in India.

This group includes over 70 diamonds of exceptional size and weight.

The collection possesses coloured diamonds which are particularly highly valued in world collections. Among them are rose-cut diamonds of a deep pink colour, 3 $\frac{5}{16}$ carats in weight, a stone of a delicate violet shade weighing roughly 10 carats, a large almost colourless stone with a faint shimmer of pink weighing 40 $\frac{12}{32}$ carats, and finally, a large rose-coloured diamond set in a brooch weighing more than 17 carats. It is of interest to note that writings on the subject repeatedly mention a rose-cut diamond of a crimson hue weighing 10 carats which Paul I acquired for 100,000 rubles. Actually, however, this flat stone set in a diamond diadem, is a pale shade of pink and derives its vivid colour from the foil and paint in its setting.

Far more valuable are the blue diamonds: a deep blue 7-carat stone set on a pin, a white stone with a blue tint in a rivi re and a gorgeous pale-purple diamond the like of which we do not know any other collection to possess.

These are the principal diamonds of the State Jewels.

More words are inadequate to describe them, and my cursory enumeration can at best give only the haziest idea of what is unquestionably the world's richest collection of beautiful gem-stones.

Emeralds, which the ancient Greeks said caressed the human eye, harmonize well

with diamonds. Pliny said that this stone of nature is earth's greatest gift, that its beauty is lovelier than the fragrant breath of spring blossoms and that the artist should not be permitted to touch it.

The green colour of this stone was highly valued as a symbol of life, youth and purity, and popular legend attributed to it magic healing powers and the gift of bringing good luck. The 3,500 carats of emeralds in the State Jewels are a dazzling spectacle indeed when they mingle with diamonds and pearls against the black background of the table.

After diamonds, emeralds occupy the second place in the State Jewels. They include two stones of 174 carats each, great dark-green cabochons weighing 153 carats, a splendid flat stone of the purest water bearing a Persian inscription, and blue-green stones from Colombia; there are several Russian stones from the emerald mines of the Urals, among them a large gem of irregular form and irregularly cut, weighing 250 carats.

The finest stone of the collection is a rare historical specimen—a huge square tablet with an exquisite foliage border studded with diamonds, weighing 136 carats, of the purest, deepest, and loveliest water; only in one corner of the tablet can one discern a few tiny cracks, the result of some accidental blow. Who owned this stone, and what is its story?

The answer is lost in the mists of the past, yet it is doubtless one of the stones that were stolen from heathen temples of South America in the 16th century; they were given an Indian cut and for several centuries shone in the palaces of the Great Moguls or the rulers of Afghanistan under the false name of Indian stones. No treasure house in the world has ever possessed emeralds that could compare with those of the Soviet State Jewels, except perhaps the collection of the Turkish sultans and Byzantine kings in those distant times when the gorgeous dark-green gems from Cleopatra's mines had not yet been scattered over the face of the earth.

Third place in our sea of flame and colour is occupied by the sapphire, that deep blue stone from Kashmir in the foothills of the Himalayas. There are also lovely azure gems from Ceylon. The big sapphires of the Fund alone total something like 1,700 carats. The finest of them is a deep cabochon covered with a fine honeycomb of hexagons. A comparison of these sapphires with the stones of other collections in the world shows that the Russian Fund occupies one of the leading places. True, we do not know the wonderful Kashmir stones of the British crown, nor can we verify the tales about the enormous sapphires owned by India's rajahs and other princes, but those we do know cannot compare with the stones of the Soviet collection either in beauty or size.

Let us now examine the red stones. Curiously enough, the red gems so greatly admired in the Orient and especially in India had little attraction for the Russian tsars. There was indeed something symbolic in this distaste for red stone. At any rate, throughout the entire history of the State Jewels the red stone rarely occurs. The rubies—red spinel and rose-coloured tourmalines—that occur



Headdress of precious stones

in a few old clasps and shoulder pieces hardly stand out among the other jewels. Nevertheless there are a few unique specimens. There is a purplish-red ruby weighing 18 carats and a huge stone from Burma weighing nearly 40. Stones of this size and greater are exceedingly rare and hence can easily be enumerated: the 175-carat ruby which belonged to a Persian shah, a stone owned by the Great Mogul Jehangir weighing 430 carats, and a ruby described in the beginning of the eighteenth century by de Booth as being the size of a hen's egg. Cracked and murky rubies are said to have been found weighing as much as 2,000 carats, but we know nothing of the qualities of these stones, their colour, tone and transparency, and one can give little credence to stories of this kind emanating from the East; in most probability the stones in question, though called rubies, were actually handsome spinel or pink tourmaline from Thailand.

Rivaling the stones in beauty and abundance is the pearl. Greatly prized by the Russian court were the Burmite and Kaffa pearls. Among the Fund's rich collection of pearls, totalling many thousands of carats in weight, there are some specimens of rare beauty, such as a magnificent 52-carat pearl of perfect form and delicate sheen, and a huge pink pearl weighing 77 carats. After the dazzling brilliance of the gem-stones, the opaque surface of these superb strings of pearls, perfectly matched in size, form and colour by skilled experts seem to caress the eye.

All this by no means exhausts the wealth of the State Jewels. Before us lie many other stones of the brightest hues. There is the pink topaz from Brazil; the dark-green alexandrite

from Ceylon, which shines at night with a ruddy glow; beautiful aquamarines and beryls, stones of the deepest blue water from Brazil; small, golden heliotropes brought from the Transbaikai in 1886 for the empress; handsome chrysolites, olive-green stones that are so rare on the modern market; turquoise objet d'art made in 1885; an old German chrysoprase; smoky topaz; the light amethyst of the Urals; the English silicious agate; labradorite; almandine from Burma; mother-of-pearl; malachite from the Urals; red carnelian from India, and agates of many colours. Here too are a superb necklace of blood-red Bohemian garnets and a reindeer's hoof set in precious stones. What a riot of colour, what harmonious beauty there is in these creations of the earth!

JEWELLERY

The jewellery in the State Jewels is of particular value, not merely because it depicts the achievements of the jewellers of all Europe, and especially France in the 18th and partly the 19th centuries, but also because it demonstrates the amazing skill employed in setting the stones and in making the best use of the specific features of each gem, an art Benvenuto Cellini has described so vividly. It is noteworthy that the superb specimens of the jeweller's art in the middle of the 18th century were not always made with high-grade stones. On the contrary, the stones in many of the outstanding pieces of this period are of inferior quality. The jeweller set them so skillfully, in such harmonious combinations and in such exquisite designs that the very defects in the stones became their virtues and the object a work of art. All the gorgeous parures, aigrettes, brooches and necklaces in the State Jewels are specimens of an art of the highest order in which metal and stone combine with one another on an equal footing. I shall give a brief description of a few of the many objets d'art.

There is the famous great bouquet with emerald foliage and diamond flowers made by a French jeweller of the Duval¹ school, probably no later than 1760. The bouquet consists of small Colombian emeralds, rather crudely cut in an irregular serrated design, and cheap Brazilian (not Indian) diamonds. This is one of the most remarkable 18th-century pieces of jewellery in existence, and has no equal either in Russian or other collections for combination of colours, delicacy of the conventional design, perfection of workmanship and richness of tone. The delicate leaves and stalks are a cunning combination of gold and emerald and the diamond flowers are set in pure silver. All parts of the bouquet are made so that they sway and sparkle at the slightest movement in a magnificent play of colour.

The most famous rivière in the State Jewel collection is executed in a different manner. This necklace of 36 large diamonds weighing nearly 476 carats is an absolutely unique selection of huge solitaires loosely connected by

¹ In the beginning of 1796 Duval and son were appointed exclusive makers of jewellery to the court of the tsar.

silken threads. These 36 superb stones, each of which represents a small fortune in itself, are threaded in two rows, the upper consisting of 21 of the largest solitaires, while the remaining 15 diamonds, combined with a few less valuable stones, are suspended loosely from it as pendants. This truly incomparable rivière is indeed a thing of breathtaking beauty. These old Indian stones are remarkable for their rich variety of colour; there are light blue solitaires, some of a pale pink water, and so perfect is the matching and cutting, that even the few defective stones with tiny black specks on them merge in a sparkling gamut of light and colour producing an object of great artistic value.

Among some of the more outstanding small jewellery objects are a hatpin of brilliants in the form of a cornucopia, the work of Duval, jeweller to the court of St. Petersburg; a brooch of brilliants shaped like a rose with leaves, an interesting example of the use of yellow brilliants in jewellery, copied from a 19th-century original by the St. Petersburg firm Fauberget. Particularly lovely are a number of aigrettes and trimmings studded with sapphires, some in the form of sprigs of flowers in massive silver of old-fashioned workmanship, with large, light pear-shaped Ceylon sapphires; others are small aigrettes of diamonds representing fountains. The fountain, incidentally, is one of the finest types of artistic jewellery in the Fund. The brilliants are cut and set so as to depict the play of water, and combined with the large blue sapphires which sway freely at the slightest movement of the aigrette, they produce an impressive effect.

Lovely too are the red stones in the collection. Here you have a pair of earrings with ruby-red Brazil diamonds, and old, Burmese rubies set in foil. The graceful lines and the movement of the pendants, the richness of the stones set in a somewhat heavy design remind one of the ornateness of the Catherine period and the florid style of the eighties of the 18th century.

Perhaps the most remarkable of all the pieces of jewellery dating back to the middle of the 18th century is the famous bouquet of narcissus. By virtue of its workmanship, the beauty of composition and the amazing simplicity of conception, this is the finest item in the entire collection. The flowers, set on flexible stems, look like living blossoms, some of the petals are studded with white brilliants, and the hearts are made of bright yellow brilliants set in gold. Eighteenth-century jewellers possessed the ability to make effective use even of mediocre and defective material as a vehicle for their artistic conceptions. Take, for instance, a bracelet of black silicious agate, a cheap stone, but skillfully set in gilded silver; a remarkably lovely bracelet of pearls and bone from reindeer hoof; a pair of earrings made of rose-hued granite picked up in the environs of Leningrad, and fragments of ordinary pegmatite ground in the shape of a flat rose; irregular pearls in the baroque style, or, last but not least, two pins made of Russian diamonds set in silver and gold, one of which bears the inscription, "1838 on the Kushaika River." These diamonds of fine white water

weighing between $\frac{3}{16}$ and $\frac{4}{16}$ carats are the first Russian diamonds found in the Gorablagodat district of the Urals. According to the archives, they were cut at the Peterhof lapidary establishment.

To complete this description of some of the jewellery in the Soviet State Jewels, I should like to mention a piece dating back to 1762 whose artistic value can hardly be overestimated. It is the famous large crown of the former Russian tsars with large brilliants and pearls and the famous scarlet balas ruby beneath the cross.

HISTORIC STONES

For three years we endeavoured to trace the history of some of the stones in the State Jewels. Much is still veiled in mystery, much will never be known to science. Nevertheless some absolutely authentic facts of the origin and history of the stones have been established.

I shall dwell on a few of these.

The most remarkable stones are the diamonds, three of which occupy a place by themselves, not only as jewels but also as mineralogical specimens. These are the Diamond Tablet, the Orlov Diamond and the Shah Diamond.

The Diamond Tablet is an amazing solitaire set like a mirror in an enameled gold bracelet of Gothic style, made during the reign of Alexander I. The Diamond Tablet, a so-called portrait stone, together with its lateral facets is more than 7.5 square centi-



A diamond diadem with sapphires

metres in area and weighs about 23-25 carats; it is a stone of the rarest purity and beauty. Of old Indian workmanship and with two tiny blemishes covered with soft gold, it is in all probability a fragment of some enormous crystal found somewhere in the sands or alluvial deposits of Golconda in India. Unfortunately, the history of this stone is altogether unknown. The only reference we find to it is in ministerial correspondence of 1893 and even then its weight is incorrectly recorded as 68 carats. It should be noted that in the 17th and 18th centuries when miniatures were greatly in style, there was a big demand for so-called portrait diamonds which

were used instead of glass and brought out the beauty and sparkle of colour. Today, incidentally, such large slabs of pure diamond have purely technical, as well as considerable artistic value, inasmuch as they can be used in the latest X-ray and spectroscope apparatus.

The Orlov Diamond was acquired for Catherine II by Count Orlov in 1772. Of old Indian workmanship, it has not been recut since it left the hands of the Great Moguls of India. Many legends and tales are associated with this famous gem which was mounted on the royal sceptre, but only now have we been able to reconstruct the true story. This rose-cut diamond was found in the early 17th century in the Kollura mine in Golconda. Its original weight was evidently around 300 carats and it was one of the two natural fragments of a large stone belonging to the Great Moguls. Dissatisfied with the cut, Jehan Shah ordered the stone recut into the diamond now known as the Orlov, weighing approximately 200 carats. This stone attracted the attention of a traveller named Tavernier who visited the court of Aurangzeb. In 1661 another large diamond cut in the form of an Indian rose and later known as the Koh-i-nur Diamond fell into the hands of Aurangzeb. This stone turned out to be a splendid match for the Orlov Diamond, then known as the Great Mogul. Pallas in his annals mentions that the Orlov and Koh-i-nur diamonds were set in the throne of Nadir Shah who took possession of Delhi. In 1737 the Orlov Diamond was called "Darya-i-Nur," which means "sea of colour," while Koh-i-nur means "mountain of colour." From this point the two stones have a different history. The Darya-i-Nur was stolen and after passing through several hands turned up at the Amsterdam diamond market where it was purchased in 1772 by Orlov.

Under Catherine II the Orlov Diamond was set in silver in the sceptre encircled by brilliants.

The principal landmarks in the history of the Shah Diamond are engraved in the gem itself. These dates combined with our own research now replace the old Iranian legends about the stone.

It was found a long time ago, most likely 500 years ago, in Central India, at a time when tens of thousands of Hindu workers toiled in the valleys of the Golconda River extracting the diamond-bearing sands from the river's depths and washing them under the tropical sun. Here among the quartz pebbles a remarkable stone was found, a crystal some three centimetres in size, of slightly yellowish tint but extremely pure—a perfect diamond. It was taken to the palace of one of the powerful princes of Ahmednagar who most likely added it to his other treasures in the gem-encrusted jewel caskets. Using some tiny sharp-pointed tools dipped in finely ground diamond powder, the local craftsmen executed an incredible feat by etching on one side of the stone an inscription in Persian lettering: "Burkhan-Ni-zam Shah II. The year 1000." That same year (which was 1591 by our calculations), the Great Mogul of Northern India sent his envoys to the central provinces with a view to estab-

lishing his authority there. The ambassadors, however, returned two years later with paltry gifts—only 51 elephants and five precious objects. Akbar the Great resolved to take possession of the recalcitrant provinces by force and an armed expedition subjugated Ahmednagar bringing back from there a great many elephants and valuables. Among the latter was the diamond which thus passed into the possession of the Great Moguls.

But the day came when Shah Jehan, ascended the throne of the Moguls. He was a great admirer and connoisseur of precious stones and himself learned to cut them. To perpetuate the memory of the stone and himself he ordered the inscription "Jehan Shah, Son of Jehangir Shah, 1051" (1642 our era) to be engraved on the back of the diamond.

The ruler's son, Aurangzeb, envied his father's wealth and resolved to take possession of the throne. After a long struggle ending with the confinement of his father in a dungeon, he took possession of the precious stones of the Moguls, among them this diamond. The reign of Aurangzeb began with all the magnificence and splendour for which the Orient was famous in those days.

The throne of the Great Moguls according to the French traveller Tavernier's descriptions, was decorated with a vast number of gems. The canopy above the throne was also adorned with precious stones, and on the side facing the courtiers hung a decorative piece from which was suspended a diamond weighing 80-90 carats, surrounded with rubies and emeralds, so that when the ruler sat on the throne it hung before his eyes like a talisman.

This talisman was the famous Shah stone. To the two original inscriptions has been added a deep groove cunningly cut around the entire stone in such a way as to allow it to be attached by a rich silken or golden thread.

Nearly 75 years passed after Tavernier's visit to the Mogul. The stone was kept first in Jehanabad and later in Delhi until in 1793 a new storm cloud burst over India.

Nadir Shah from Persia marched into India from the west and captured Delhi, taking possession, among other valuables, of this diamond.

The stone went to Persia, and nearly a hundred years later a third inscription was added: "King Kajar Fateh Ali Shah, Sultan 1242".

More time passed and new events occurred to shape the destiny of the diamond. On January 30, 1829, the Russian diplomatic agent in Teheran, the Persian capital, died at the hands of a hired assassin. The news caused great consternation in Russia. The tsar's diplomats demanded that Persia be punished, and the whole of Russian society was in a turmoil, for the victim was not an ordinary diplomatic representative. It was the famous writer A. S. Griboyedov, author of *Wit Works Woe*.

In an effort to placate the "white tsar", Persia sent a special delegation to St. Petersburg headed by the Shah's son Prince Hosrev-Mirza to present to Russia in atonement for the crime

of the "Persian people" one of Persia's most treasured possessions, the famous Shah Diamond.

And so the diamond was accepted in payment for Griboyedov's life.

After the delegation had been received with due ceremony, the diamond was placed among the other treasures in the Diamond Room of the Winter Palace. This superb gem with the three engraved inscriptions lay on a bed of velvet guarded by sentries from guards regiments.

...When the world war of 1914-1916 broke out, the diamond was dispatched to Moscow, where along with crates of other valuables it was placed in the vaults of the Armory and buried under thousands of cases loaded with evacuated gold and silver, porcelain and crystal.

One cold day in early April in the year 1922, a group of us wrapped in warm fur coats with collars upturned made our way among the chill corridors of the Armory. The cases were brought in. There were five of them, including a heavy iron chest, carefully tied and with large wax seals. A skilled mechanic had no difficulty in opening the chest without a key, for the lock was of the poorest and simplest kind. Inside, hastily wrapped in tissue paper, lay the jewels of the former Russian tsars. With fingers numb from the cold we drew out one shining gem after another. There was no list or inventory of any kind and no sign of any order in the packing. Everything pointed to some hasty order given by the last reigning tsar or perhaps the tsarina, and so gems, necklaces, diadems and brooches had been hastily packed in the famous Diamond Room of the Winter Palace and without arousing any curiosity had been shipped by ordinary train to Moscow in July 1914.

In a small packet among the crown jewels lay the famous Shah Diamond.

In 1925 the crown jewels, now the State Jewels of the U.S.S.R., were exhibited for the foreign scientists who came to this country to attend the celebration of the bicentenary of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

Viewed against the background of the complexity of human society the beauty of these rare creations of nature described above may seem inconsequential. Yet it seems to me that in the history of these stones one can read pages from the past on the ruins of which the better life of the future is being built.

THE STORY OF THE "GREAT RUBY"

One of the choicest items of the splendid collection of precious stones owned by Rudolf II, King of Bohemia, was a red ruby the size of a hen's egg. The king had inherited it from his sister, the widow of Charles IX of France. De Booth, who was jeweller to the Bohemian Court, gave a thorough description of it in his well-known book on gems, naming it "the Caesar Ruby."

In 1648, during the war with the Swedes, the ruby was taken from Prague to Scandinavia and presented to Queen Christine as

a trophy of war. After the death of the Queen, the stone was taken to Stockholm and in 1777 was presented by Gustavus III Adolphus to Catherine II when he visited St. Petersburg. It was a valuable gift indeed, for the stone was regarded as historic. De Booth himself estimated its value at 60,000 ducats, although he said he believed it was actually worth more. The stone, which weighs 255 $\frac{3}{4}$ carats, was kept in the Diamond Collection at the Winter Palace until 1914. In going through the State Jewels in 1922 it drew my attention and I made a detailed study of it.

The gem appears to be of Indian workmanship resembling in shape a cluster of grapes. It is not of particularly pure water and in general is not of high quality.

At our request, Aminov, professor of mineralogy in Stockholm, made a study of a glass model of this stone made in 1748 and established that the specific gravity of the original should be in the neighbourhood of 3, which does not coincide with that of ruby. The outward appearance, colour and verified specific gravity soon led us to the firm conviction that it is not a ruby at all but rubalite, i.e., rose tourmaline.

THE BLUE STONE OF THE PAMIR

Nature has not been lavish with her blue stones, and the rarity of blue colour in the earth seems to be a curious contrast to the wealth of blue in the changing hues of sea and sky. It is as if the earth were unwilling to imitate the other two elements. This is what the Indian lapidary might tell us were we to ask him why blue stone was so rare.

There is one blue stone that can be traced throughout the history of human culture: the bright lazurite of Afghanistan. Along devious caravan routes it found its way into distant Egypt, China, Rome and Byzantium.

The Russian tsars bought pieces of the Afghan stone from Afghan and Bokhara merchants, and as a particularly valuable material it went into the adornment of the palaces of growing St. Petersburg. The light, spotted lazurite from the shores of Lake Baikal could not compete with it, and until very recently the Afghan stone remained unrivalled.

Yet for all that legends had long been current in Central Asia about the presence somewhere amid the inaccessible peaks of the Pamirs between the blue-tinted glaciers and the cobalt sky of a stone the Persians called "lazuard". English travellers of the early 18th century, who at the risk of their lives visited the forbidden Afghan deposits, wrote about it, and aged Tajiks who climbed the mountain peaks in pursuit of mountain goats, whispered to one another about it. The general geological layout confirmed the belief that such a deposit of blue stone existed somewhere on the upper reaches of the turbulent Shah-Darya on "the roof of the world."

In the autumn of 1930, an expedition of Soviet geologists, myself among them, set out in search of this Pamir lazurite. It was

a perilous journey. The narrow tortuous trail wound steeply above the left bank of the river and after crossing the divide at nearly 3,500 metres above sea level led to a small hamlet of three huts. Leaving our horses here, we began the ascent the next day following one of the mountain streams which bore the name of "Lyajuar-Darya," or "Lazurite River."

Night caught up with us at a tiny spring that formed something like a cave at the foot of a huge boulder. The barometer indicated an altitude of 3,870 metres. We toiled on up the steep mountainside strewn with boulders, then along a narrow ledge and once more up a sharp incline covered with loose shingle until at an altitude of almost 5,000 metres the white expanse of a glacier appeared before us against the deep azure background of the clear Pamir sky. The sheet of ice was covered with huge chunks of rock that had broken off from a practically sheer cliff of marble and gneiss. And in the snowwhite marble ran veins and knots of lazurite, now bright blue, now of as delicate a hue as the forget-me-not, now with a sheen of violet or green. Thus Soviet scientists were the first to discover the Pamir deposits of genuine deep blue lazurite.

But if the geologist had discovered it for science, the local inhabitants had known of its existence long before. One of our guides told us that he had heard of the deposit from his father, a hunter named Nazar-Amat, and that as far back as 1914 he and three other Tajiks had attempted to reach it but had been stricken by "tutek" or mountain illness, and had been obliged to give up the quest.

The year after the discovery, a camel trail was laid through to the lazurite deposits at the cost of tremendous effort and six tons of the beautiful stone were brought down. The Russian Lapidary Trust had good reason to be proud of the objects that were made of this material.

About ten years have passed since then. The white marble region of the Pamirs produces many and varied coloured stones. On the upper regions of the Kugi-hal River is the place from which the East has obtained its red stones for thousands of years—brilliant rubies and rosy-red spinels known as "lals".

The Pamir lazurite deposits have already surpassed the blue stone mines at Slyudyanka in the Transbaikalia and have left far behind the Chilean deposits in the snow-capped heights of the Andes where American companies attempted to mine light blue lazurite. Pamir lazurite will also outstrip the old mines of Afghanistan to approach which was to court death and whose miners were kept in chains all their lives, for the stone was regarded as sacred and the property of the Amir alone.

One of the most delightful items in the precious gem-stone collection of the Academy of Sciences' Museum of Mineralogy was a blue lazurite elephant. We had come across it quite accidentally in the early years after the Revolution in an abandoned

jewelry store owned by the Fauburger firm on Morskaya Street. Naturally, we made a thorough study of it, registered it, and put it on display.

The elephant was unquestionably a superb piece. It had been ground rather crudely by the method frequently encountered in objects made in the mountain hamlets of Afghanistan or India. Some particularly skilled lapidary had ably used these methods of primitive stonecutting.

More remarkable still, however, was the stone itself. It was a monolith of the brightest blue colour almost without blemish and with isolated pyrite crystals visible only in the head of the elephant. In Indian fashion, two small brilliants just as crudely cut from rock crystal had been inserted for the eyes.

For many years this stone occupied its place in the show-case of our museum until an unexpected event occurred.

Amanullah Khan, the Amir of Afghanistan, visited the U.S.S.R. on his return from a trip to Europe in the spring of 1928. He was given a royal reception as organizer of the new Afghanistan, and the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. was only too glad to welcome him and show him its collection of old Arabian manuscripts about Afghanistan and the beautiful coloured stones of Russia.

In the large light-flooded corner hall of the Mineralogical Museum in Leningrad we laid out diverse gems and coloured stones, ranging then according to Newton's colour scale.

The exhibition made a deep impression on Amanullah Khan. A son of the East and a great connoisseur of gems, he could not but express his admiration of the exhibition and questioned us in his broken French about the origin and names of some of the stones. He was particularly drawn to the table where the lazurites, and among them our elephant, were displayed.

He held the piece long in his hand, tenderly stroking its back and with shining eyes murmured something in Afghan to his suite.

"What do you think, shall we make him a present of the elephant?" I asked my colleagues. "It has no longer any particular scientific value for us."

I turned to Amanullah Khan and offered him this fragment of Afghanistan as a souvenir of our museum.

The Amir would not hear of it—he could not think of depriving a Soviet museum of such a fine specimen. I assured him that our museum was interested exclusively in uncut stones and hinted that it might be of greater value to us if he could let us have some stones and ores from Afghanistan.

While I spoke he continued to stroke the elephant absently, then, as if coming to some decision, he handed it over his shoulder to an adjutant. The latter swiftly put it away and Amanullah proceeded to view the exhibition as if nothing had happened, passing from the blue lazurites to the green jade and golden amber. I confess I was sorry to part with our elephant.

While the Amir was watching a demonstration given in the auditorium by Professor A. V. Shubnikov, the eminent expert on crystals, I discussed with my colleagues a question that had been broached many times before, namely, that of sending someone to the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan to study and give a scientific exposition of the famous lazurite mines near Faizabad. Till then nothing was known of them save the inadequate reports given by travellers and geographers, and innumerable legends had veiled them in mystery.

I suggested that it might be a good idea to ask Amanullah Khan to give permission for one of our scientists to go to Faizabad.

A few days later we received official notification that the Afghan Ambassador in Moscow would issue a visa and was ready to render assistance to the Soviet scientist whom the Academy of Sciences would send for scientific research in Afghanistan.

On October 4th A. N. Labuntsov, a mineralogist of the Academy of Sciences, crossed the frontier and arrived at the Afghan outpost of Ish-Kashim where he was cordially received and given special accommodation. Nevertheless, a messenger was sent to the governor of Badakhshan to ascertain what was to be done with the unknown visitor.

After a journey of several days over tortuous mountain paths the messenger returned with an answer the meaning of which was unclear. It would be better to go to Faizabad, Labuntsov was told, for the governor was there and he would no doubt give the necessary permission to travel to the Lazurite mines at Fargama.

In Faizabad, however, Labuntsov received no such permission either from the governor or from the Padishah.

Weeks passed and the Soviet scientist, guarded (for his personal safety of course) by two Afghans, waited, whiling away the time by taking walks about town and watching the seething life of the marketplace. He was warned, however, against wandering beyond the city limits for "times were dangerous,"—an uprising was brewing against Amanullah Khan.

The moment was obviously inauspicious for Labuntsov's visit and he returned home, bringing with him only two or three minor stones from the environs of Faizabad to add to our Museum's collection.

What happened to the lazurite elephant? We have no definite information on this score; we only know that on his return from his European trip to Kabul, Amanullah Khan transferred all his numerous presents to the summer palace in Faizabad. Later, brief newspaper dispatches reported that the palace had been burnt down and the presents looted. And the lazurite elephant? It is a well-known fact, that the blue colour of the stone does not suffer from fire, and sometimes even turns a deeper shade. Moreover, the elephant was cut from a single piece and hence could not be easily broken. For all we know it may have been carried to some wild mountain village. Or perhaps devout Moslem bore it away to some gloom-

filled mosque where it now lies among the other treasures of the East.

The story of this stone breaks off at this point.

YAKOV IVANOVICH KAKOVIN'S EMERALD

The story of one of the world's largest emerald crystals is particularly interesting because we know it from beginning to end.

In 1831 Kakovin, chief of the Yekaterinburg lapidary establishment, reported that he had discovered some emeralds. Spurred on by his initial success, he took up the search for these stones with great zeal, sending numerous miners and gem-stone experts into the surrounding forest country where they discovered one deposit after another.

Particularly notable for size and colour were the stones found on a wooded hill overlooking the Tokovaya River at Sretensk. In 1834 an enormous emerald was found here and delivered to Kakovin. It weighed 2,226 grams. One side of the stone had been polished by nature herself revealing in spots the delicate green of the stone as translucent and pure as the best of precious gems.

This and many other stones pleased the head of the lapidary establishment so much that he decided not to send them along to the court in St. Petersburg as he was expected to do. Word of Kakovin's dishonesty reached the capital, however, and an inspector was sent to the spot. Soon enough the latter discovered that the books were not being kept properly and some "friend" of the chief's suggested to the inspector where the missing stones might be sought. In the official papers of the time we find a detailed report made by the official, who recorded with obvious pride how he had found precious stones under the chief's bed and in the wardrobes in his bedroom. Among them, the auditor reported, was "one of the finest quality, as green as grass... I believe it to be the most valuable of them all and perhaps superior to the emerald mounted in Julius Caesar's crown...."

The retrieved stones were registered, packed in cases and dispatched to St. Petersburg by special messenger. Kakovin was questioned, put in Yekaterinburg prison and questioned again. Finally he hanged himself in his cell.

A young apprentice from the Yekaterinburg lapidary workshops named Permykin, who had been sent to St. Petersburg with the stones, delivered them to Lev Alexeyevich Perovsky, the imperial steward, who was also a patron of the arts and a passionate admirer of precious stones. Perovsky had been a collector of minerals for a long time and his collection included some splendid crystals of shining black perovskite imbedded in a blue mass of crystalline limestone. The emeralds he now received were just what he wanted for his collection, and once again our emerald got lost on its way to the Court, this time in Lev Perovsky's private museum.

I have not been able to discover how Prince Kochubei acquired Perovsky's col-

lection. Kochubei was more than an admirer of precious stones; he was a great connoisseur. He spent many an evening with Academician N. N. Koksharov, the eminent mineralogist who pioneered in the exact study and measurement of Russian stones. The two were soon joined by Artillery General Gadolin, who was one of the finest geometricians and crystallographers of the time.

Kochubei jealously guarded his collection and constantly added to it. Among the remarkable stones of this outstanding collection of world fame our emerald occupied the leading place. Later, wishing to preserve the stones for his heirs, Kochubei moved the collection to his estate at Dikanka, Poltava province.

Years passed and peasant uprisings broke out, and in an outburst of popular indignation Kochubei's manor was burned down and the collection was scattered over the gardens, some of the beryls being thrown into ponds. It was next to impossible to get all the samples together again, though nearly three-fourths of them were found after prolonged search. The Kakovin emerald was among the stones that were recovered. The son of collector Kochubei sent the collection to Kiev, where it was catalogued. Young Kochubei decided to sell the stones, but not in Russia. Instead he took them to Vienna where they were put on display and offered for sale to the leading museums of Europe and America.

We, Russian scientists, could not, however, think of allowing this collection of Russian stones to pass into foreign hands. On behalf of the Academy of Sciences, the late Academician V. I. Vernadsky raised the question in the State Duma. He and the present writer were sent to Vienna to inspect and appraise the stones—and they proved to be valuable indeed. The Kakovin emerald alone was estimated by jewellers at 50,000 Austrian gulden, and our estimate for the whole collection exceeded 150,000 gold rubles. Nevertheless the collection had to be bought. After a great deal of red tape, the Academy of Sciences was able to get the Duma to pass a bill on the purchase of the stones to be placed "at the disposal of the Museums of Mineralogy of the Imperial Academy of Sciences," as the decree signed by Nicholas II stated.

Professor V. I. Krzhizhanovsky was sent to Vienna to bring the collection to St. Petersburg. He carefully packed the stones in a definite order, and the Kakovin emerald went into one of the cases containing beryls. The cases were shipped to St. Petersburg in special cars, but to our horror and dismay when they arrived at the old premises of the museum two of the cases were found to have been stolen enroute.

The news was a great shock to all of us. No insurance coverage was adequate to compensate either for the loss of these unique stones on which Koksharov had conducted his original investigations or for the Kakovin emerald.

With trepidation we pounced on the lists showing the contents of each case, and dis-

covered to our relief that the lost cases had contained the less valuable minerals and that the most important, particularly the case with the topazes and emeralds, were safe.

I recall the solemn scene presented by the commission formed to receive the stones. It consisted of three members of the Academy—V. I. Vernadsky, A. P. Karpinsky, and F. N. Chernyshev, the investigator of the North and director of the Geology Committee.

We, the custodians of the museum, picked up the stones and passed them to the academicians. I still remember the unassuming figure of Alexander Petrovich Karpinsky, dressed in a frock coat, as he presided. On one side of him sat Academician Chernyshev, one of the greatest geologists of last century, in full uniform emblazoned with decorations, and on the other side, Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky, inspecting with reverent absorption the crystals handed to him and entering them in the catalogue.

Thus, the world's greatest emerald became part of the collection of the Academy of Sciences' Museum of Mineralogy. Together with the Academy of Sciences, the emerald was moved to Moscow in 1935. During the German invasion of Russia the stone returned temporarily to the Urals whence it was brought back to Moscow after the defeat of the Germans.

SIMPLE STONES

It is said of the philosopher Kant that on viewing a collection of amber-encased beetles he exclaimed: "Oh, if only they could tell their life story how simple it would be to write history!"

These words come to my mind every time I pause before stones that have no written history, for I know that the story of their birth, transformation and death is no less fascinating than the story of the gems which I have described above.

I remember an incident that occurred in my own youth. I was already interested in stones at the time and had a good mineral collection of my own. I used to wander along the seashore near Odessa picking up crystals of calcite in the cliffs and searching for masses of gypsum in strata of clay, but paying particular attention to the pebbles on the beach. One day, after a heavy storm, the breakers washed up on shore several bright green stones less smooth and round than ordinary pebbles. Carefully collecting all these stones I took them to the university to have them identified. Professor Prendel, an old mineralogist, inspected them with interest. He took them to his laboratory and made several chemical tests. Then he ordered his grinding tools and asked me to come back the following Saturday.

I was amazed to hear from him that the stones were pieces, true, not of genuine jade, but of what he called nephritoid, a stone that does not belong to these parts and obviously had been brought from somewhere else. Once more he asked me to come back in a week. When I did, he told me something

I still distinctly remember although about 50 years have passed since then.

"These stones are from New Zealand," said the Professor. "For several years I have been studying these fragments which are washed up by the tide on the approaches to the Odessa port. Long ago I noticed that among these stones there are very many 'foreigners' and I advanced the theory that they may have come from some of the foreign ships which dock at Odessa to take on cargoes of grain. Frequently, these ships carry as ballast rock taken on board in previous ports of call. As a matter of fact, a great many ships from New Zealand have called here in recent years which would explain why your pebbles are identical in every respect with the green rock that comprises a substantial part of that island."

"This incident opened for me another chapter in the history of the peregrinations of green stones. This is a chapter that does not deal with those early times when jade was carried along devious caravan routes or when wars were fought over it; it tells of the new channels of commerce created by the world market and world industry.

The deeper I delved into the history of stones as the years went by, the more I saw that the facets of the crystal, its brilliance and colour, and the minutest features of its structure, its satellites and the endless chain of other details not only determine its nature but tell the story of its long life which is often measured in thousands of millions of years.

As a matter of fact, an experienced mineralogist can tell without error the origin of a stone by merely looking at it. Not infrequently he can even name the mine where it was found. He does this by drawing on a host of unwritten laws, a knowledge of detail and features, hues, forms and combinations which cannot be described in words but which comes with long years of experience.

I devoted many years of my life to the study of the diamond crystal. That was at a time when its origin in the green volcanic strata of South Africa was still a matter of conjecture.

Studying the structural details of hundreds of thousands of crystals with my teacher Professor W. Goldschmidt, we soon found that the facets of diamond were of an unusual nature. Instead of rectilinear geometrical forms we found rounded surfaces. We presumed that the diamond crystals were formed at high temperatures in the molten interior of the earth, and that their rounded form is the result of the complex transformation which they have undergone in the course of time.

A few years passed and numerous experimental researches, conducted, true, on other gems, revealed that our assumption had been quite correct and that the past history of diamonds was written in their facets.

Only subtle scientific analysis of the findings of long and patient investigation gave the key to the wordless history written on the stone.

In some cases, however, the scientist can read the history of a stone more easily and accurately, and can determine the chronology of the past maybe almost as exactly as the archeologist and historian can determine the age of finds, belonging to the Stone Age.

The remarkable achievements that have been made in physics and radiology have enabled us to read the age of a stone in the specimen itself, and the calculations of radiologists tell us with reasonable accuracy how many tens of millions of years have passed since gems were first formed in various parts of the earth's crust.

We know today that the red eudialyte of the Khibiny tundra was born roughly 300 million years ago from molten rock impregnated with water vapour and gases. We also know that beryl, topaz and the lovely Amazonian stone of the Ilmen hills are somewhat younger, only 230 million years old, while the beautiful moonstone or belomorite from the White Sea coast is older still—over 1,600 million years.

Is this not one more deciphered chapter in the history of the earth?

Or take marble. In the variegated design of the yellow and red marble of the Crimean Yaila used to finish Moscow's subway stations, for example, you can see the remains of sea shells of the most diverse forms, fragments of corals—in fact, all the seething life of the Jurassic sea.

The history of marble is even more easily read than that of gems. Here the researcher is aided by the paleontologist with his knowledge of the evolution of the animal kingdom and the paleographer with his pictures of the primordial landscape, climatic regime and the whole environment in which the sedimentary limestone was formed at the bottom of the Jurassic seas to produce today's superb decorative stone.

The mineralogist in his turn reads not only the origin of the stone, but determines its further evolution as part of the geological development of southern Russia.

Cracks and veins run through the stone. The oldest of them date to a period before the processes that transformed the soft limestone into handsome decorative marble had begun. These veins are white in colour and in them one can frequently find tiny crystals of pyrites and the black specks of some organic substance resembling graphite. These veins "healed" long ago and the marble does not readily crack around them.

They are intersected, however, by other veins of a yellowish hue. Chemical analysis shows that they contain more magnesium and, associated with the transformation of the stone into marble, they throw light on the mysterious phenomena which welded the soft limestone into the compact Yaila stone.

A third set of veins intersecting the first two and consisting of yellow calcite resemble the stalactites and stalagmites that are formed today in the Crimean caves. Along these lines the stone readily splits into huge slabs. An experienced worker knows the

nature of each of these veins and makes use of his knowledge to cut the stone into the required shape. Each kind of vein has its own technical value.

The more precise our methods of scientific investigation become and the deeper we penetrate into the nature of stones, the more startling discoveries we will make about the past history of the simple stone and the more exact will our knowledge be of the chronology of its history, and consequently of the history of the earth.

In this lies the value of a science which not only describes the present, but is able to read in the present the story of the past and to comprehend the future as well, to predict that which we do not yet know, but which we desire to know.

And science is important because with its help we will be able to control this future and shape it nearer to our heart's desire.

Translated by Rose Prokofyeva

POSTMAN

Who is knocking at my door
With bag behind and badge before,
In Leningrad's official suit
Of navy blue from cap to boot?
It is he,
It is he,
Who brings the mail to you and me.
He has got
A lot
Of letters,
In the bag he's searching through,
From Poltava,
Kharkov,
Gorky,
Balaklava
And Baku.
At seven o'clock his work begins,
At ten o'clock his bundle thins,
At twelve o'clock or half past one
The postman stops—his work is done.

2

From Tula comes a Special for
Our friend Jitkov, who lives next door.
"A Special for the man next door?
He doesn't live here any more."
"You mean to say he went away?"
"He's in Berlin—but not to stay."

3

With everything ready,
The wind holding steady,
Jitkov left the country by air.
But soon on his trail
Went a train with the mail,
And his Special was found in its care.
The packages neatly
Were sorted completely,
(Two postmen took care of the mails.)
They stamped them and stacked them,
Addressed them and packed them,
While bumping along on the rails.
A card—to Dubrovka,
A box—to Pokrovka,
A note—to the village of Klin.
A letter—to Menshall,
And also the Special
Addressed to our friend in Berlin.

4

Here comes the postman in Berlin!
The last delivery is in.
His pants are pressed, his shoes are shined.
His general manner is refined,
For that is the condition,
Required of his position.

The people rush in endless streams
Amid the murmur of machines
That hurry out of sight
From morning until night.

An oaken door is opened wide,
The postman bows—and steps inside.
“A Special here for Herr Jitkov
Who lives upon the floor above.”
“Just yesterday at five o’clock
His boat for England left the dock!”

5

The mail
Will fail
To get anywhere
By itself. But in charge of the post—
By rail
Or by sail
Or by airplane mail
It will travel to any far coast.

It isn’t in need of a tag or a ticket.
Just buy it a stamp, then lick it
And stick it
In very plain sight
So the postman can see
That the letter has paid him
Its traveling fee.

It doesn’t need to eat or rest,
It only must repeat:
Special. England. London. West. Eleven Bobkin Street.

6

On London streets, the busses run
By fits and starts, and every one
Is hung with cards and signs
On advertising lines.
From one of them we hear a shout—
“The next is Bobkin Street! All out!”

On Bobkin Street! On Bobkin Street!
The letter-man is Mr. Sweet.
His step is light and springy,
His legs are long and stringy.
The house that he is looking for
Has got “11” on the door.
He gives a hurried knock,
And someone turns the lock.

He hands a letter from his pack
Across the narrow sill.
The butler reads it, hands it back—
“Jitkov is in Brazil!”

7

The ship will be
Upon the sea
Within another minute.
And it will travel westerly
With freight and people in it.

While in motion
On the ocean,
Postmen show no less devotion,
Sorting out the mails,
Behind the steamer rails.

Along the streets of Rio,
The palms hang hot and still,
And wearily Don Basilio
Serves letters in Brazil.

An envelope all rumpled up
And crumpled up with wear,
Is clutched in his perspiring hand
As though he didn't care.
Among the scrawls in many hands
That make it look so sad,
A final message now commands:
"Return to Leningrad!"

Who is knocking at my door
With bag behind and badge before,
In Leningrad's official suit
Of navy blue from cap to boot?
It is he,
It is he,
Who brings the mail to you and me.
In his hand he brings once more
The Special that he brought before.
"Hey, Jitkov! This isn't mine!
It's a Special! You must sign!"

My neighbour hurried out of bed.
"My! How interesting!" he said.
"Look at this! The postman sent
My letter everywhere I went.
Over land and over sea,
Faithfully in search of me,
It has been to cities on
The Rhine, the Thames, the Amazon!
"To the sole address remaining,
It has come at last to me,
Thanks to postmen uncomplaining,
Muscle-straining men of training!
To the postmen uncomplaining,
Bringing mail to you and me!"

Translated by Margaret Wettlin

BOOKS AND WRITERS

A CONTROVERSY ON LITERATURE WITH OUR FOREIGN FRIENDS

The peculiar position held by the Soviet land as the only Socialist country in the world is reflected in the attitude of people abroad to Soviet literature, an attitude that is often so contradictory that it is little short of amazing.

It cannot be said that the foreign reader shows no interest in Soviet literature. Many of our books have been translated into all modern languages; the comments of the press and individual readers are numerous, the majority are sympathetic, while the best Soviet books have been greatly admired abroad.

Nevertheless, a considerable section of the foreign press makes accusations against our literature, which if true would make the undoubted success of our books throughout the world an inexplicable miracle.

We are not alluding to those accusations that are brought against us by that section of the foreign press which has no other ideals than those of hard cash or is directed by fascists or semi-fascists. We do not propose to enter into a discussion with journalists of this type; it is sufficient merely to refute the slander and expose the slanderers. However, the accusations, which appear on the pages of the friendly press from time to time repeat in the form of doubts, advice or reproaches essentially the same abuse and calumny carried by the hostile press.

Despite this similarity, we can distinguish the deliberate lie from the honest doubts which may have arisen to a great extent under its influence; we realize that the existence of the "cordon sanitaire" made it difficult for the truth about the Soviet Union to penetrate the reactionary political blockade. Not all these misunderstandings were cleared up during World War II.

The common struggle against fascism and the heroism displayed in that struggle by the Soviet people opened the eyes of millions of foreigners to the lies which had surrounded us. War, however, is war; it leaves little time or energy for anything not directly connected with the needs of the battlefield. At the same time, old misunderstandings do not disappear of their own accord. Left to themselves they will, in the course of time and with the very effective assistance of the obscurantists, turn into hardened prejudice which hinder people from learning the facts and forming their own opinions.

It cannot be denied that some of this prejudice is very annoying. This does not lessen our desire to bring about cultural collaboration with all other nations, or our confidence in the feasibility of this collaboration. We cannot, therefore, let these conceptions rest: we want to understand and be understood. Friendship is based on perfect understanding.

Imaginative literature does much to help bring about a better understanding between peoples and it is our belief that it will play a still greater role in future. It is of no little importance that literary judgements should be free of all prejudice. In some countries the word "conformity" has become inseparably bound up with our literature and has so frightened some good citizens that one would think that their own literary viewpoints were highly "non-conformist."

We do not know to whom the credit for dividing literature into these two churches accrues, and we are not particularly interested. In order not to enter into a senseless discussion on an imaginary subject we shall deal only with those concrete accusations which are now being levelled against us by literary circles in the West.

We Soviet writers are told the following: your literature is not free; it is not protected against state or public interference as the literature of the bourgeois-democratic countries is protected. Your writers have to win official approval... they may write only that which is required by the state for its direct aims, that is the essence of John Lehman's argument. The ideas of your writers about the relations between literature and society are also too much in agreement, says Lehman and his comrades. They themselves wish to deprive their art of independence by affirming that literature must serve social aims; service means subjugation, absence of liberty. Even on questions of artistic style your writers display a strange unity: all of them declare themselves to be supporters of the socialist-realistic school. John Lehman sarcastically points out that this is a state doctrine, which in its very nature, is something negative.

Professor Bowra thinks that if the Soviets believe that all the arts serve a social purpose and must have a political character, they are in danger of destroying them or at least of reducing them to a dull mediocrity.

Another subject of fierce attacks are the statements by Soviet writers concerning tendentiousness, and the lofty educational role of literature. These principles, which find expression in our literature, are condemned as "Propaganda".

John Lehman says that propaganda to the average Englishman is like sage-pudding to the schoolboy; nothing will ever make him like it. Vassili Grossman does not allow himself to be interested in anything except the victorious outcome of the war, says a critic. Of course, that is a good way of winning a war but it is a very poor method of writing novels.

Above we have chosen fairly severe formulas used by those who criticize us, because we prefer plain speaking to vague indirect hints. We are prepared to consider the

ardour of our opponents as a sign of their passionate desire for truth.

We also desire truth and will try to give clear answers. They will achieve the aims with which they were written if we are correctly understood. Agreement or disagreement alike is only of value if based on understanding.

ON FREEDOM IN LITERATURE

Literature is free, literature is not free. . . Are not these conclusions formed too hastily? Would it not be better first to discuss what freedom means for literature as a whole and for the individual writer?

Here is a very simple example: "I want to write but I am poor and therefore cannot obtain the necessary education." Is this freedom or lack of freedom?

Another example, slightly more complicated: "I have written a novel exposing the international intrigues of the ruling circles in my country, which are leading to the rebirth of fascism and to new wars. Even if I find a publisher willing to accept my work, the book will bring down upon me the accusation that I have injured my country. The greater part of the press controlled by the capitalists against whom my book is levelled, will calumniate me in the eyes of millions of people. Most probably the profession will be closed to me." Let us decide whether this writer is free? Of course, formally he is. Neither the law nor the authorities forbid him to write or publish whatever he wishes any more than any capitalist is forbidden to write whatever he pleases. Somehow, one involuntarily recalls Anatole France's words: "Our laws are the most just in the world. They forbid rich and poor alike to sleep under bridges."

The withdrawal of censorial and police interdicts does not mean perfect liberty. Did Byron and Shelley leave their native land of their own free will? Mark Twain suffered all his life from the petty cavils of the hypocritical "morals of society"—was he free? Even in his own family those morals were represented by voluntary censors who did not give the writer any peace.

Balzac, when he wrote his *Les Illusions Perdus*, realized how much liberty a writer and literature had to expect in a society where money ruled although in his time the capitalist methods of exerting pressure on literature were only just in the process of formation. There were not yet any monopoly trusts and cartels to swallow all the branches of man's activities, including the publication and sale of books, the press, the cinema and the theatre. Is there any honest, educated man who will say that literature has become less dependent on the capitalists since Balzac's time?

There is only one natural conclusion to be arrived at: the term liberty, whether applied to politics, economics, philosophy, religion, art or every-day life, is never an absolute conception. There is no liberty without limitations. Not only is liberty a relative conception; it may, and very often does, carry within itself its own contradiction—enslavement and oppression.

We shall be as precise as space permits and shall deal with each of the above accusations separately. The first and most important of these—the question of the general understanding of freedom or lack of freedom in literature—will naturally take up more space than the others.

For instance, the free propagation of fascist ideology in literature restricts freedom of thought in young readers. The free sale of opium, which was always fought for in China by both western and eastern imperialists, means restraining the free mental, moral and physical development of the Chinese people. The freedom to purchase food at prices which the manufacturers are free to raise closely resembles a compulsory measure: either go hungry or else work to death in order to earn the money with which to buy food. And so forth, and so on.

Hence we see that the word "liberty" only acquires meaning when we understand its true significance in every given case. Once this significance has been determined, a second question inevitably arises: for whom is this freedom whose limits we have defined, real and beneficial?

The problem of freedom and lack of freedom is brought up in an interesting connotation in Lenin's private correspondence some years before the October Revolution. Inessa Armande, one of Lenin's party colleagues, planned to write a pamphlet on demand by the working women for "free love" and asked Lenin whether he regarded the theme as suitable. In his reply, Lenin wrote that, first of all, he considered the subject too indefinite. "I would advise you to throw out the 'demand (of women) for free love' altogether. . . For what do you mean by this demand? What *can* it mean?" wrote Lenin. "Freedom from material (financial) considerations in matters of love? from religious prejudices? from the veto of papa, etc? from the serious things in love? from childbirth? freedom of adultery, etc."

Having enumerated a number of the "freedoms" which might be applied to love, Lenin pointed out that all of them clearly fall into two groups in accordance with their true, social meaning.

Let us illustrate Lenin's meaning by one example: the freedom of woman from slave-like duties in her own home. For the rich classes, where the housework is done by hired servants, this type of "freedom" which abolished one of the obstacles in the way of free relations between man and woman is easily acquired. It is a different matter in the poor working classes where serious changes must be brought about in the entire existing political, economic and legal system of society to make this freedom real. But these changes in the capitalist system would in the first place put an end to the above-mentioned method of achieving this freedom for rich women.

Thus we see that when applied to different classes of society one and the same

"freedom" acquires not only a different but an opposite meaning. A concrete, realist approach to the understanding of "freedom" is highly important for literature and all true writers.

The task would be a comparatively easy one were the freedom of literature limited only by more or less direct and external means of pressure, such as the power of the state, capital or public opinion. The matter is complicated by the fact that man's inner life, his methods of reasoning, his ideas also have limits of freedom determined by society. This is the chief form of historically essential limitation of human thought and conscience. That is why we give it such serious consideration.

In class society, the ideology of the ruling class dominates; it is supported by the material, administrative and legal resources at the disposal of the ruling class; it makes a certain form of representation a habit with the people which is strengthened and continued by the system of upbringing and education. If another ideology exists in addition to the ruling one and grows steadily stronger, this is a sure sign that another class exists, is fighting stronger and is fighting for power.

We do not assume, of course, that every member of any class has a fully conscious understanding that his own personal convictions are of a class-conscious nature, that his ideology is laying the foundation and attempting to consolidate a social system profitable to his own class. Such class-consciousness is by no means general. Very often class ideology is given the form of the eternal truth sought by all mankind. If ideological deceptions do form part of the arsenal permanently used by the exploiting classes in the social struggle, the deception is almost always accompanied by self-deception—the illusion of the class about itself. This is true not only of the ruling class but also of any bourgeois and petty-bourgeois groups of society.

The existence of an ideology, that is of an extensive and more or less integral set of opinions, presupposes the existence of people capable of expressing this ideology, the ideologists. Such people—politicians, philosophers, artists, and so forth—are possessed of a talent for generalization; it is their speciality and their profession to develop the consciousness and at the same time the illusions of their class. Therefore, these people of intellectual pursuits stand more or less aside from the practical side of life which falls to the lot of those absorbed in material cares. And these latter are more passive in their attitude towards ideology than the specialists, and are inclined to take from it those elements most needed for their practical work. The illusions which ornament practical life, hiding its mercenary and egoistical nature, are of comparatively little interest to them. For instance, the free traders see in the "open door" and "equal opportunity" theories an expression of the eternal ideas of democracy, of higher justice, of world competition for progress, and so on. The capitalist, engaged in international trade willingly accepts this theory, approves

it, but then and there forgets all its philosophical trimmings, because the business side of the theory is much closer and of greater importance to him, the side which generalizes and normalizes the right of the bigger and stronger capitalist to lure out into the open market and destroy weaker competitors, who are hiding under cover of protectionism.

There is in literature an analogy in the relationship between the ideologists and practical men in one and the same class of society. (The specific features of art amongst other branches of ideology will be dealt with in a special article on realism in art.)

This relationship has been superbly defined by Karl Marx in the chapter of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, which deals with the left wing of the bourgeois democrats who declared themselves supporters of social reforms:

"The peculiar character of Social Democracy is epitomized in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded not as a means of doing away with both the extremes, capital and wage-labour, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony. However different the means proposed for the attainment of this end may be, however much it may be trimmed with more or less revolutionary notions, the content remains the same. This content is the transformation of society in a democratic way, but a transformation within the bounds of the petty bourgeoisie. Only, one must not form the narrow-minded notion that the petty bourgeoisie, on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interest. Rather, it believes that the special conditions of its emancipation are the general conditions under which modern society can alone be saved and the class struggle avoided. Just as little must one imagine that the democratic representatives are all shopkeepers or enthusiastic champions of shopkeepers. According to their education and their individual position they may be separated from them as widely as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not go beyond the limits which the latter do not go beyond in life, that they are consequently driven theoretically to the same tasks and solutions to which material interest and social position practically drive the latter. This is in general, the relationship of the political and literary representatives of a class to the class that they represent."

The class content of a world outlook does not always show itself. The classes are not separated from each other in a watertight compartment. Thanks to his intellect and education the ideologist is sometimes able to rise to an understanding of other classes and of society as a whole. This does not mean that he becomes an observer of life, "above all classes;" but only that he gains access to the more progressive possibilities hidden in another class; his social, historical and moral ideals are widened and his criticism of the narrow practical life of his own class becomes sharper and more profound than before. Such an ideologist may even go over from the ruling class to the side of the subjugated, oppressed

class. (Of course, such cases are much rarer than changes from the camp of the weaker to that of the stronger.)

Russian literature can show us an excellent example of such a case: Leo Tolstoy, aristocrat and landlord by birth and upbringing, who in his works raised the problem of the moral decline of the nobility due to its parasitic life at the expense of the toiling peasantry; he finally broke with the ideology of the nobility and became an ardent ideological champion of the peasantry, the most progressive, revolutionary-democratic class in Russia in the sixties of the last century, when Tolstoy's ideology was formed.

But such cases are not frequent. They are possible under two conditions: in the first place, the internal decay in the ruling class, which is on the decline, must have progressed sufficiently, and a strong movement of protest must exist in the exploited class; in other words, as Lenin said, the situation must be one when the ruling classes can no longer live in the old way and the exploited no longer wish to do so.

Secondly, only a writer with an overpowering love of truth and civic courage, a writer in whose works truth is the major character, can achieve such an understanding of objective historical truth, such complete emancipation from his old class prejudices in the name of human progress, in the interests of the people.

A less acute writer (or an ideologist in general), dealing with the social situation will only express dissatisfaction with the social system and his own class, will criticize their shortcomings more or less wittily or pathetically, but without seeking to bring about a decisive reconstruction of the entire foundation of the society and the class, which displease him. In such cases mutual dissatisfaction arises between the writer and the practical men of his class. He will accuse them of vulgarity and egoism, of not understanding their own great tasks, while they will consider him an empty visionary or even a dangerous dreamer.

The writer, however, begins to win the sympathy of the other class, either oppositional or revolutionary, and himself begins to sympathize with that class. The true class nature of the ideology is then difficult to distinguish. This state of affairs may continue to the end of the writer's life if no upheaval takes place to threaten the existence of the class to which he belongs. In such a case, however, even the semblance of the writer's thoughts ever having been independent of his class entirely disappears.

A writer may make a break with his former views and go over to a severe criticism of them from the position of another class. Russian literature offers the greatest example of such a renunciation of class egoism for the sake of the people.

It began at the end of the 18th century with Radishchev who went to prison defending the rights of the peasantry against his own class and against the monarchy.

At the beginning of the 19th century a number of revolutionary writers appeared in Russian literature who themselves belonged to the ruling class, the nobility, but who

headed the protest of the people against that class. First amongst them were writers connected with the Decembrists (the heroes of the anti-monarchist uprising on December 14th, 1825); they were few in number, as Lenin said, and were isolated from the people so that their cause was doomed to failure. But they gave their lives in order to arouse the following generation for the struggle for the emancipation of the people. They were followed in the forties by Alexander Herzen, a man of noble birth and one of the greatest thinkers and activists of world revolutionary democracy, one of those who marked the transition from bourgeois democracy to socialism. We have already spoken of the most complete switch over in class position, that of Leo Tolstoy.

This transfer of an ideologist from the oppressing class to the side of the people is not prompted by personal gain. It is almost always accompanied by privation and personal danger. The Decembrists ended their lives on the gallows, Herzen ended his in exile while Leo Tolstoy was savagely attacked in the government press and was cursed by the church. The impetus which compels an ideologist to change his views so radically comes when the social crisis makes a direct impact on him, when he sees the falsity of his former outlook and when he cannot retain that outlook because his conscience does not permit him to.

Avarice, personal gain, in a more or less conscious form, play their part in the opposite case when the writer at the time of a social crisis sees the full profundity of the contradictions which separate the people from the ruling class to which the writer belongs and begins energetically defending the conservative position.

This is accompanied by the disappearance of the former sincere illusions that the propertied class was of use to the nation, these illusions being replaced by more or less open apologetics. The writer begins to laud the ruling, propertied class and its members, the practical men, for what they are. The inner constraint of the writer becomes unmistakably clear.

I consider that an exceptionally good example of this is the career and ideological development of one of the most talented American writers of the 20th century, Sinclair Lewis.

His novels *Main Street*, *Babbitt*, *Elmer Gantry* and *Arrowsmith* were true to life. His faithful and sensitive observations of the human soul were evidence of the author's profound devotion to the ideals of progress and humanity. Sinclair Lewis had a clever and broadminded understanding of human nature. In *Arrowsmith* he created the most profound and poetical character of a woman in the literature of the western countries. With rare integrity he portrayed the sincere desire for science, progress and discovery. The artistic force of his work was increased by the boldness with which he exposed the defects of the capitalist system. Sinclair Lewis saw his chief enemy in the capitalist trusts, in the power of capital over culture, and over the workers in the field of culture. He showed how the best efforts of advanced people were distorted

owing to the fact that these persons themselves did not possess the means to implement their ideas, while the capitalist-monopolists of production and the market, in their own mercenary and base interests, supported charlatans in science, stupid and corrupt hypocrites in matters of the public conscience, ungifted and impudent self-advertisers in art.

Nor did Sinclair Lewis spare the social group which was closest to his sympathies: the middle classes of modern America, from the working intelligentsia to comparatively small capitalist factory owners, who had not yet been dragged down to the position of a shareholder who has no contact with the enterprise which keeps him and in which he is a cipher rather than a man. In this social layer Sinclair Lewis found the best-preserved individuality, honesty, true interest in democratic liberties. Here, in this class, he saw resistance to the growing economic and political dictatorship of the multi-millionaires. Yet his sincere sympathy did not permit him to embellish reality. He portrayed the corruption, ignorance, weak will which gain a growing hold on people of the middle classes under the pressure of dominant social relations and ideology.

Sinclair Lewis portrayed the great and small emotional catastrophes which destroy people who take up the fight against "society", i. e., against its masters. We do not remember a more bitter tragedy than the lonely death of Liora from whom Martin (Arrowsmith) was separated not by his feelings—he loved her faithfully and unchangingly—but by his dependence upon the rich through many long years. They distorted and maimed his scientific career, forcing him first to break with their institutions which were dishonest undertakings, then to make concessions and return because there was no other work and he could no longer bear the eternal poverty. The same desire for independence in research and also for an easier, better provided and more comfortable life drew Martin to the superficial, although well-educated, self-confident rich woman, although her mentality was much lower and coarser than Liora's.

In the end, after many humiliating compromises, Martin's honesty forces him to leave the capitalist circle, for he is convinced that by becoming one of its members he would stifle his creative talent. And there is only one way out left to him—to work at his own risk, without certainty of success.

The pressure of capitalism on *Babbitt* is shown in a different way, less acute and tragic. Every attempt made by the hero of this novel to act uncompromisingly, in accordance with his own understandings of honour meets with a cruel rebuff from his circle of society, reaching as far as boycott. By nature Babbitt is an intelligent and humane man. But his intellect cannot develop in the banal, stagnant petty-bourgeois life, his attempt to be independent—whether with good or bad intentions—are childishly helpless. Even a man with such undeveloped demands as Babbitt feels the pressure of the levelling rod with which big capital rolls and crushes society.

Sinclair Lewis, however, never succeeded in drawing those final, clear conclusions from his observations of life, which were the aim of

all great writers; he was neither a very profound nor an original thinker. He had a very one-sided attitude towards modern social contradictions, and he certainly did not attach to the working class, the most consistent and decisive anti-capitalist force, the importance in the struggle for democracy which belongs to it. But thanks to his great literary talent Sinclair Lewis was nevertheless an excellent writer. He saw and heard many things in life which were missed by his contemporaries and compatriots. He did not hide the shady sides of modern society, or hesitate to write about these factors which corrupt this society from the inside. Owing to this, Sinclair Lewis became popular in the anti-capitalist circles of America and other countries. And he himself, while not breaking with the social system of the United States, felt and declared himself to be the friend of all consistent democrats in his own country and abroad. Actually Sinclair Lewis' political polemic had only one definite feature: he denied that the agents of monopoly capital interfere in all spheres of American life. In view of the fact that the struggle against this sort of reactionary influence is to the common advantage of all other sections of society, Sinclair Lewis might really suffer from the illusion that his thoughts are on an "all-humanity" plane.

Things went on in this way until this "super-class" illusion was shattered by a social clash. The writer's belief in his freedom from class limitations in itself proved to be a bourgeois-democratic prejudice. This clash occurred when the world conflict between capitalist, imperialist reaction on the one hand and the democratic working people on the other became intensified. Sinclair Lewis was shocked by the fascist coup in Germany. The barbaric, stupid "ideology" and the sanguinary brutality of fascism in practical politics exceeded everything that his own imagination had created when thinking of the evil actions of the capitalist reactionaries.

Nevertheless, Sinclair Lewis foresaw chiefly "lawful" and particularly economic methods of coercion from that side and he thought that these could be fought also from the lawful positions of bourgeois democracy. This was characteristic of the writer. The antagonism between capital and hired labour, between the capitalist and the working class, which was tearing the world asunder, did not seem irreconcilable to him. Capitalist exploitation was only clear to him in its most open parasitic form; the contradictions between the workers and the bourgeoisie seemed to him "extremes" which might be reconciled. This attitude towards the reality of modern society left the writer almost unconscious of the polarization of the class forces which had long been taking place. Therefore, when the fascists seized power in Germany and declared a world offensive against democracy he seemed to awaken from a profound sleep.

There is no doubt that Lewis' strongest feeling at that time was fear, not for himself, of course, but for culture, democracy, humanity. With the courage of a man in mortal dread he dared to put the question which all his contemporaries were not bold enough to utter: "Is a repetition of that which is happening

to the Germans possible here, in the U.S.A.?" And he answered his own question in the affirmative. He felt himself in honour bound to utter this bitter truth, and wrote a novel with the ironic title: *It Can't Happen Here*.

The writer's intentions were undoubtedly good. But as we have already mentioned, he himself seemed to be still dozing when he began to waken his sleeping compatriots, and he himself only dimly saw that which he was warning them against. That is why this novel was written in the form of an outcry. His former delicate and even style, maintained even in the most dramatic moments, could here only be recognized in the chapters and episodes dealing with the central figure of the novel, Dormouse, and his family. But the greater part of the book is a pamphlet, a satirical placard painted in unrestrained colours with rude deformations.

Let us be understood correctly: we do not blame the author for shattering the uniformity of his style; still less do we object to the genre of a sharp, political pamphlet. But for Sinclair Lewis this was a dangerous form to choose. It was a form that exposed the reactionary features previously included in his world outlook.

The realistic manner of artistic portrayal is not simply a stylistic, external manner, but is, first and foremost, a method of artistic reasoning which demands from the writer constant analytical work and helps him to verify the truth of that which he portrays by comparison with reality. Not only does the desire for truth of form limit the writer's fancy or caprices; thanks to this desire, the artist, possessed of descriptive talent of great force, reproduced objective pictures of life of much greater depth than his own conception. Satire, however, departs from the usual forms of human, social relations so that it is difficult for the writer to check his own ideas objectively. That is why a pamphlet is a dangerous weapon not only for those against whom it is directed but for the writer himself. Only a writer who has made a careful study and formed firm opinions of the events which he has decided to describe can master this form of writing and give his fancy free play fearlessly and confidently, without losing himself in the crowd of whimsical figures. A pamphlet is publicist fiction, and the firm world outlook of the author is an essential condition for its success.

Let us try and analyze what knowledge is imperative for an author planning to write a pamphlet on such a subject as the fascist danger. In the first place, the writer must have a clear understanding of the historically objective role of each of the major units of modern society, of each of its classes. To this we must add a particularly accurate and profound knowledge of the life and ideology of the industrial working class—the chief anti-imperialist, anti-fascist force—and also of the land workers and peasantry. Otherwise, without a knowledge of the life and interests of the people, how can one defend democracy?

Sinclair Lewis did not possess this knowledge. We have already said that his imagination as a writer was almost exclusively taken up by the life of the middle layers of society. This was one of his shortcomings before also,

if we are to measure him by the gauge of the best writers of world literature. Of course, Leo Tolstoy in portraying the nobility was able to raise the problems of the people's life as reflected in that of the nobles, and to attempt a solution of these problems from the people's viewpoint; yet, at the same time, Tolstoy would not have been Tolstoy if *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, *Resurrection* and his short stories had not also been direct portrayals of the fate of the people, of men and women of the people.

Sinclair Lewis' social criticism did reflect protest of the masses against capitalism, but on the whole the author's criticism was concentrated chiefly on the oppressive force of the monopoly, that is, on those factors which are of the most importance to the middle-class and petty bourgeoisie whose economical independence is being destroyed by the monopolists. Both his approach to and solution of social problems were dictated almost exclusively by the interests of the middle classes. His artistic talent was the saving feature in this narrow approach, and he portrayed with great strength and clarity that which he himself did not thoroughly understand. When he turned from realistic writing to the pamphlet—a genre chiefly intellectual and openly tendentious—his former shortcomings became serious faults.

The novel remains true to life as long as the author describes how a little group of millionaires, reactionary imperialists, heading the trusts, evolve a fascist conspiracy and instigate an uprising. We hope that we shall never see this sort of an uprising in America, yet there is nothing fantastic or impossible in this part of the book. It begins with Dormouse, editor of a small liberal newspaper (a figure which seems purposely to reproduce the traits of character of Mr. Babbit and whose home life even resembles that of the latter), acting as the major character and organizer of the anti-fascist underground resistance movement. Indeed, the entire anti-fascist struggle in this novel is led by small capitalists, manufacturers and liberal intellectuals. It is their endurance, courage and organization which encourage the people to take up arms.

What is the role of the working class and its political leaders in Sinclair Lewis' book? He portrays the Communists as good fellows but limited dogmatists, unable to appraise the social superiority of the Babbitts. According to the author, the American Communists are so carried away by the example of the Soviet Union that they wish to introduce the Soviet methods and program into America automatically. Sinclair Lewis accuses the Communists that it is they who open the road to power for the fascists, by not being able to come to an agreement with the ideologists of the middle-class bourgeoisie, and to bow to their wise guidance. There is a worker in the novel—Dormouse's former chauffeur, who becomes a fascist and a functionary of the local fascist organization. Being in love with Dormouse's daughter, he makes concessions for the family and thus gives them a chance to carry out anti-fascist work. But he himself has the soul of a lackey and is happy at the opportunity of showing his power over his

former masters. The remaining workers only fight against fascism under the guidance of the bourgeoisie.

Does this treatment of the Communists and the working class differ from any reactionary lampoon? What has happened to Sinclair Lewis' former democratic sympathies? In this novel they narrow down his connection of the "people" to that of the "petty bourgeoisie."

And there are even worse things in the novel. Sinclair Lewis' sudden hatred of the working class is not limited to America but spreads to the Soviet Union. This same Sinclair Lewis, who but recently wrote and spoke words of esteem and good wishes, has now given his imagination play to invent the most malicious libels on Soviet people. He does not hesitate to draw rude caricatures of the best men in our country who are highly respected and admired by the people all over the world. Sinclair Lewis prophesies that when the moment for a decisive showdown comes, the Soviet Union will fight with the fascists against the democratic countries! Truly amazing and wonderful "foresight!..."

Had this been the author's first novel one could have assumed that it was written by a Hearst hireling. But we remember a different Sinclair Lewis and suppose that money cannot buy him. Then why this change? Why such a moral decline?

Awakened by the explosion of the class struggle, Sinclair Lewis was first of all urged by fear for the class to which he is ideologically bound. He saw that the working class formed the chief social force opposed to fascism. He had proof of this in the venom with which the German fascists on coming to power began to persecute the working class leaders and the free workers' organizations. But what chiefly roused Sinclair Lewis against it was the fact that the working class had proved itself to be a conscious, independent and great social force. The working class wants Socialism; and Socialism means the end of the class system of society. This would mean that the middle bourgeoisie, so dear to the heart of Sinclair Lewis, would cease to exist! This outraged him to such an extent that he did not even stop to think whether the entire middle class would be the loser by this, or only its exploiting groups of small plunderers. Without further deliberation he rushed into 'battle! With whom?! In the name of what?!

Let us assume that there are plenty of people in the U.S.A. who would be prepared to listen to the political sermon of the author of *It Can't Happen Here* and who would like to know what should be done to avoid the fascist danger. The novel contains an answer to this, although a strange one. Sinclair Lewis' "positive program" consists only of the advice not to permit the big capitalists to influence state politics in the future. But how is this to be achieved? Maybe by the introduction of a law that persons with an income exceeding a certain figure be deprived of the vote?

The author does not reply to this. He has such respect for the principle of private capitalist property that he does not even mention such a method of depriving the monopolists

of political power as the nationalization of large enterprises and banks although this is a demand which has been put forward not only by the Socialists but also by certain left-bourgeois parties. His "program" excludes any real resistance to the economic and political power of the trusts. On the other hand, his calumnies and the fervour with which he incites "society" against the workers are so great that not the least doubt remains concerning the author's political position, which no clever imperialist would object to.

If Sinclair Lewis had been in closer contact with the people, had he tried to broaden his own world outlook he would not have given in so easily to the class egoism which flooded him, would not have parted so readily with the democratic views in which he undoubtedly once believed and which he has now thrown overboard as a figment, an illusion. Sinclair Lewis, however, did not have enough strength of character and civic courage for it is these qualities that force the writer to seek the truth and not to deny it even when it contradicts his own class prejudices.

That is why Lewis, denying reality, has lauded the middle bourgeois class, hiding that which binds this class to reaction and which he himself once portrayed; that is why he has libelled the truly advanced working class and its progressive leaders who always have been and remain the mainstay of all the forces fighting against reaction. Such a lie cannot serve as a basis for true art. That is why, in denying democracy, Sinclair Lewis has degenerated both as a public figure and as an artist. And it happened under the influence of his own, constrained class conscience. If the war against German and Japanese fascism, and the post-war struggle between the defenders of democracy and the supporters of reaction teach him nothing, then there is really no hope for him.

We have dealt in such detail with Sinclair Lewis because the example of this writer, who was considered in his own country to be one of the most independent and free, came to our minds involuntarily when we read how British and American writers were pitying our Soviet literature as being dependent on the Socialist society and, therefore, "not free". Apparently they are satisfied with their own freedom and independence. But we do not envy them. Their point of view is by no means new. This is what Vladimir Lenin wrote in 1905 in answer to Russian propagators of this theory:

"... furthermore we must inform the bourgeois individualists that their tale about 'absolute liberty' is nothing but pure hypocrisy.

"In a society based on the power of money where the mass of the workers become impoverished and a handful of the rich live a parasitic life, there can be no real liberty. Are you free in relation to your bourgeois publisher?.. This absolute freedom is a bourgeois or anarchic fiction (for anarchism as a world outlook is the bourgeois theory turned inside out). One cannot live in society and be free of that society. The freedom of the bourgeois writer, artist or actress is a masked dependence (or a mask hypocriti-

cally donned) on the money-bag, the purchase price and the souteneur.

"We socialists expose this hypocrisy, we tear aside the false labels, not in order to obtain a non-class literature and art (this would be possible only in a socialist society that is outside of all classes) but in order that literature which possesses a sham freedom but is in actual fact bound up with the bourgeoisie should be counterposed by a literature that is really free, a literature that is *openly* bound up with the proletariat.

"This will be a free literature because not avarice and ambition but the idea of social-

ism and sympathy for the working people will recruit more and more new forces for it. This will be a free literature because it will not serve the sated heroine or the bored and obese 'upper ten thousand' but the millions and tens of millions of working people who are the flower of the country, its strength and its future."

In one of our next articles we will deal with the relations between literature and Soviet society, that society which carried through the proletarian revolution and organized itself on socialist principles.

IGOR SATS

"PEOPLE WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE"

This is the title of a book by Petro Vershigora which summarizes in epigrammatic form the major theme of his novel about partisans who fought in the Patriotic War.

Superiority in machines was not the only deciding factor in the outcome of the war. Mechanical superiority was enhanced by moral superiority. The Soviet Union's victory was also the victory of a humane social system over a system based on misanthropy. The Soviet soldier who did his duty honestly during this war was a man of a new type whose make-up was enriched by the entirely new traits of a character formed in the course of the 25 years' existence of the Soviet state.

Not all our friends in the West saw or understood these new features and although they were eloquent in their admiration of the mass heroism of the Soviet people they frequently sought the sources of this heroism in the depths of the traditionally "impenetrable Russian soul."

Vershigora's book is a truthful and realistic analysis of the sources of victory. This alone is a great merit but the book is not confined to the problems of wartime. Although the war ended in victory over fascism a true democratic peace has not yet been won.

A grim struggle is being waged for this peace against the dark forces of reaction all over the world. The outcome of the struggle depends, to a great extent, on how those who seek peace understand the words "a clear conscience", on their conception of an "honest man's duty" when it is a question of fighting fascism. We must understand what a complicated change and growth has taken place in the meaning of honour and a clear conscience, how far they have diverged from the old, conventional interpretations.

Perhaps it will be easier to understand this by making a literary comparison. The hero of Greenwood's very talented novel *Mr. Bunting in Peace and War* is a hard working, thrifty and conscientious clerk, self-satisfied in his narrow-minded world outlook.

When the war knocked at his door, or rather when it howled over his roof tops, Mr. Bunting did his duty, as he understood it, to the end. He suffered all hardships bravely; with unerring punctuality he travelled to his office in blazing London; with his neighbours he bravely kept watch during the air raid, in the effort to protect his suburban home, and with the cry: "Buntings, forward!" he and his daughter rushed into burning buildings to save human lives.

Greenwood's novel ends in a eulogy in praise of the ordinary Englishman, defending "his home, his castle". The novel is extremely realistic and, therefore, we can easily picture Mr. Bunting at the present time. He has returned to his old job, with his old diligence, with still greater thriftiness (times are hard!) and with all his former narrow-mindedness. He is all for a lasting peace, of course, but in his mind the guarantee of this lasting peace is the atomic bomb in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon race. He would be extremely annoyed were anyone to tell him that in order to ensure the security of his

own home he must fight for the liberation of Spain from the fascist yoke and for the suppression of the new seat of fascism in Greece which is being so energetically defended by British reactionary speakers and journalists.

The war has not done away with any of his prejudices. And these are prejudices, on the strength of which, the dark reactionary forces in the capitalist countries are preparing a new war, enslaving the people and forcing the Buntings once more to subject themselves to the horrors of total war.

Certain characters, portrayed in Vershigora's book, have "Bunting's" understanding of a clear conscience and a soldier's duty.

For instance, there is the Slovak Lieutenant Colonel Josef Gusar, who serves under the Germans. He so clearly sympathizes with the Soviet partisan army under Kovpak, which is active in the far rear of the German troops, that the partisans venture to send a scout to him with an offer to come over to their side. The lieutenant colonel is sincerely moved by the partisans' trust in him. But he flatly refuses to join them. In reply to the argument that other Slovaks are doing this, he says:

"They do wrong. . . We do not fire at you, when we are alone, even though we see you. All our soldiers are on the side of the Russians. The Russians are our brothers. We help them in every way we can. . . We cannot do more at present, because all of us, Slovaks, have families at home and if we join you our wives and children will be killed. Destroy the Germans! We, too, hate them. We shall not interfere."

The behaviour of Gusar's men when a platoon is led out by the Gestapo officers to shoot the partisan Parkhomenko, who has fallen into the hands of the Germans, is described by a partisan girl, Valya:

"And then, quite unexpectedly, when the order was given and the soldiers raised their rifles, Parkhomenko began to speak to them. . ." Valya could not remember his exact words, sobs choked her, but through her tears she repeated again and again:

"He spoke of the friendship of the Slav peoples, and then called out: 'Slovaks! Czechs! Whom are you shooting, your brother?'"

"Then the German shouted his order again, and the company raised their rifles. All the soldiers fired together. Parkhomenko stood at the edge of the pit and . . . smiled. The soldiers had all fired into the air. The German yelled with fury and rushed at the soldiers, brandishing his Mauser. Parkhomenko jumped over the pit and raced down the cemetery. The German shot two soldiers.

"But suddenly, Parkhomenko stopped and then ran back.

"Fire, fire, brothers!" he shouted. But the soldiers stood silently. And the German fired all his bullets into Parkhomenko. I ran away, I couldn't stand it any longer. These Slovaks will not shoot a partisan, but neither will they raise their hands against the Germans. Damn them, they're not men, but some sort of domestic animal. . . ."

Of course, one cannot say that Lieutenant Colonel Gusar and his soldiers are men without conscience. They have a conscience. But their narrow-minded understanding and moral standards deprive their conscience of the qualities needed if the fight against fascism is to be fought to the end.

Another character of this type depicted in Vershigora's book is the commander of a small partisan detachment fighting in the vicinity of his native village; this Soviet citizen has not yet broken free from the same narrow understandings which fettered the conscience of Lieutenant Colonel Gusar. His group is acting in collaboration with Vershigora's larger detachment possessing two tanks, several whippet-tanks and other arms; against orders, the partisan commander places one of the detachment's two anti-tank guns outside his own hut. . . . To all orders and arguments he has always one and the same answer: "I won't leave my post as long as I'm alive, but the gun will remain where it is." He fights bravely and is killed in the end. Vershigora describes his funeral and how the partisans paid their last respects to this man who died willingly laid down his life in the fight against the enemy but would not agree to risk his hut.

Neither this partisan, nor others like him, whom Vershigora finds words full of bitter truth, are the heroes of the book entitled *People With a Clear Conscience*.

A motley company of men from all walks of life met under the banners of the "partisan army" of the legendary Ukrainian Kovpak whose raids penetrated many thousands of kilometres into the rear of the German armies. There is Kovpak himself, an old and experienced soldier, who fought as a private in World War I and as a partisan against the German invaders in the Ukraine in 1918. And Mikhail Menisty, the 14-year-old village orphan boy, who had been the mainstay of a whole family and who went barefoot to join the partisans, giving everything in order to obey the dictates of his heart. There is Rudnev, commissar of the partisan army, a man with a clear Communist world outlook, with the clever mind and passionate heart of a true democrat. And the partisan Kolka Mudry (the wise), a brave fellow, who before the war had been a shady character but who, during his service with the detachment, became an honest defender of the homeland and broke with the past forever. There are Communist Party leaders who had been purposely left in the rear of the German army to organize resistance, and regular officers of the Red Army who would not lay down their arms in encirclement, and peasants, factory workers, teachers, bookkeepers, students, old men and young boys and girls—all Soviet citizens who did not wish to live under German lash, under German law. Some of them had come with the set purpose of defending their Socialist ideals and organizing the people for the struggle, others were motivated by vague, almost instinctive desires for a free and happy life. All of them had rallied to form a powerful military unit in the far rear of the enemy, without any outside pressure or influences being brought to bear, all this at the instigation and insistence of their own conscience. They formed the partisan army that won leg-

endary fame by its courage, daring and audacious heroism.

Wherein lay the secret of the victories won by this army which spent years in the German rear?

While the words "partisan detachments", "guerrillas" are usually connected with heroic deeds of daring, they are often also bound up with the idea of "wild free troops", lacking discipline and acting "each a law unto himself."

Vershigora's book refutes these false, romantic ideas with irrevocable clarity. Cut off from the main armed forces of its country, and always in much greater danger than the regular army, the safety of the partisan army depends to a much greater extent upon the actions of each one of its soldiers, and therefore, such an army needs iron discipline, binding all ranks, from top to bottom. As Vershigora points out, the distinctive feature of a partisan army is not its lack of discipline but the fact that discipline is maintained by methods other than those generally recognized.

"In all forms of human discipline, whether of the Communist Party, or the army of the state," writes Vershigora, "there is a certain amount of compulsion, sometimes more rigid and sometimes less, but it inevitably exists. Only in the enemy rear, in the partisan detachment, there is but one form of discipline: discipline based on the authority of the commander."

With the eager interest of a person closely concerned, Vershigora works out three problems in his book of which he is not only the author but also one of the characters. What are the properties of a commander enabling him to achieve such authority? What type of men are willing to accept such discipline voluntarily and unconditionally? What aspect of a partisan army enables it to win the respect and support of the people? Vershigora's personal story provides the reader with material from which sufficiently accurate conclusions can be drawn.

Petro Vershigora, a film producer, came to the front in 1941 with most naive ideas of warfare. The bitter experience of the first days of the war immediately confronted him with the most serious problems, and these became more and more complicated as he was drawn deeper into the war, as the number of people grew for whom he felt responsible before his own conscience.

At the very beginning of the war, he was appointed deputy platoon commander for the simple reason that he was an educated man. The platoon commander was killed in the first battle, at the moment when Vershigora, under fire for the first time, had lost control over his own nerves and was prepared to run away. This moment decided the whole of his future military career.

"In the life of every soldier," he writes, "there comes a critical moment which decides whether he is to prove a coward, or a reckless hero, or simply an honest man."

The feeling of responsibility made Vershigora forget his fear for his own life at that critical moment. Without fully realizing what was happening, he killed a German, captured the latter's tommy gun, his first war trophy, and catching up with the platoon, forced it to return. Such was his entry into the role of commander in the war against the fascists.

A year later, an airplane dropped the scout Petro Vershigora onto the partisans' territory in the Bryansk forests. This happened at a time when, according to Vershigora: "A man, whose fame had already reached the partisan territory, was forcing his way towards the Bryansk forests from the Ukrainian steppes, through enemy defence outposts consisting of several Hungarian regiments; this man was Kovpak."

"In the enemy rear the truest criterion of the work of a partisan is the opinion of the people about a detachment or about an individual leader." By that time, Vershigora had formed his ideal of a partisan, as a man in whom the people believed, about whom they built legends, from whom they accepted help and whom they themselves were ready to help; and such is the true Soviet partisan.

Describing his life with Kovpak's detachment, Vershigora draws pen portraits of many great and heroic men whose graves are scattered "from the Bryansk forests to the Pinsk marshes, from Zhitomir to the Carpathians, from Volhynia to Peremyshl, from Warsaw to Brest and Bialystok." But two figures naturally move into the foreground. The figure of the good-natured, shrewd and astute old Ukrainian Sidor Kovpak, a man of the people, near and dear to them, a man without any education but with a vast experience of life and war, whose heart and soul is wrapped up in his people. And the figure of Rudnev, the commissar of the partisan detachment, a smart, regular officer, an educated Communist, a passionate democrat and a selfless fighter, who subordinated all his personal interests, including the ambitions of a talented military leader, to the interests of the fight against the German invaders.

We are particularly grateful to Vershigora for his reproduction of the character of this man who perished in the war. Commissar Rudnev is a basic figure of our Soviet reality, that truly humane type in whom the best ideals of Communist morality are embodied.

A talented and educated soldier, Commissar Rudnev was also an attentive and sympathetic teacher of his men. Naturally every commander must also be a teacher. Those whom Rudnev had to train, however, were not ordinary soldiers but men whose psychology in the majority of cases had suffered great shocks in the terrible days of the first grim military failures—disorderly retreat, encirclement or German captivity. Rudnev's task, therefore, was much more difficult than that of many other officers in the Soviet army; as a result of his work the discipline in Kovpak's ranks was enviable, and it was maintained by the men themselves. Rudnev influenced the men by his attentive, individual approach to each one of them, his consideration for each man's undiscovered or revealed potentialities, by his speech, his direct and honest propaganda.

"Rudnev," writes Vershigora, "never spoke in official language. His words drove all uncouthness and vulgarity from the soldiers. He worked tirelessly, educating them. He knocked all unnecessary cruelty out of them, he instilled confidence into them, trained them to be patient and enduring, ridiculed cowards and drunkards, and waged a particularly implacable fight against looters." Rudnev's elo-

quent speeches made an indelible impression not only by their passionate conviction but also because they showed to all his own selfless, clean life. In speaking of Rudnev, the propagandist, we cannot ignore Rudnev, the man. And that is quite natural. True propaganda is not only a matter of words, it lies in the actions, in the behaviour of a Communist.

Dealing with the question of Communist moral standard, Lenin said that every Communist must live in such a way that even people who do not know or believe in our ideals cannot help seeing that SUCH men cannot be the carriers of base, false ideas.

In this lay Rudnev's strength, by this he won authority over every man in whom feelings of honour and humanity lived (if only faintly, subconsciously). There were many such not sufficiently conscious yet honest men in the detachment, whom Rudnev succeeded in moulding into conscientious fighters for the Socialist homeland.

The baser the enemy who surrounded the partisans on all sides and the more he counted on all that was mean, cruel and dark in human nature, the nobler, cleaner and more selfless the men had to be who wanted to fight against the enemy to the end. The falseness of the enemy propaganda, calculated for the ignorant, all the more truthful, scientific and convincing the Soviet propaganda had to be.

The battle for truth, for the great human truth, requires honest, sincere, whole-hearted men. Under certain conditions, any action, even one that seems to be an essentially private matter, may endanger the entire unit.

Take the example of Sergeant Karpenko. With his scouting detail, consisting of some 10-15 men, he had found himself surrounded and was the first to join Kovpak who was roaming through the forest alone, searching for comrades.

Sergeant Karpenko was a man with a noble mind, eager for heroic deeds. In his time, he had taken upon himself the guilt for a murder accidentally committed in a fight by a collective farm tractor driver, in order to save this man who had a big family. As a result he spent several years in prison. This action alone is sufficient to characterize his profound humanity and unselfishness. Nevertheless, as commander of a company in Kovpak's army, he is one of the most difficult men and almost impossible to influence. He suffers from a psychological morbidness caused by the fear that his former sentence makes him a second rate citizen in the eyes of others. He is nervous, and at every step attempts to emphasize his independence. Moreover, he is of the opinion that by risking their lives every minute of the day and night, he and his men, who also hold themselves apart, have earned the right to live as they like during the hours not given up to fighting, and need not heed the discipline which binds them at every step.

This is a dangerous tendency in wartime. It is particularly dangerous under the very special conditions of underground, partisan warfare.

"The partisans are an army without a supplies department, without definite rules, without a revolutionary tribunal, without militia," writes Vershigora. "Therefore, it is easy for them to slip into ordinary banditry."

to use their arms to ensure an easy life of plenty."

This dangerous ambition suddenly awoke in Karpenko. When Commissar Rudnev, in view of the coming winter, cut the jam rations, this honest and courageous fighter started a mutiny in his company and even went so far as to boast before his men that he would "finish off" the commissar.

On hearing this, even the good-natured Kovpak, who was extremely tolerant of all brave men, loses his temper: "What, my commissar? He dares to threaten to shoot my commissar?" he snatched the tommy gun down from its hook. "I'll order the company on parade, and I'll shoot him with my own hand before the men. . . ."

It needed such a profound understanding of human nature, such attention to the individual, as Rudnev made it his business to display, in order to settle this matter not by means of repressions but by appealing to the conscience of Karpenko and his men. He used a strong remedy, not unfraught with danger to himself: unarmed and alone, he set out one night to visit Karpenko and his men in their dugout. And the result was equally great: for a long time after this, Kovpak and Rudnev recorded the feats of Karpenko and his company after every battle.

But human nature does not change in a day, no matter how important that day may be in the life of a given individual. Several months later, Karpenko again rebels against discipline and again Rudnev resorts to a remedy unusual in the army. He stops issuing orders to the company, does not accept reports from them, in general no longer appears to consider his unit as part of the formation. Karpenko, whose conscience already bothers him as he has lost several men in an unnecessary battle through not obeying orders, searches painfully for a way out of the stupid position in which he has found himself thanks to his "independence". Nevertheless, he tries to find a way out which will hurt his vanity least. He goes to headquarters, salutes the commissar, and formulating his request in accordance with military etiquette, asks that the third company be allowed to rejoin the detachment and that another commander be appointed in his place. Rudnev, however, requests him to retain the command of the company. Karpenko hesitates: to surrender his post to another, to fight as an ordinary private and to fall in battle—that seems the better way out to him. That would mean victory. But to accept the commissar's terms would mean defeat. And he is silent. However, his good sense prevails, and conquering his pride he submits to military discipline, accepts the company and, this time, takes himself in hand.

That is how Rudnev moulded men in the partisan detachment. By such efforts of mind and heart he achieved the transformation of Karpenko with his wounded vanity, and of a 4-year-old Mikhail Semenisty with his everlasting childish mischievousness in serious matters, and of many other men, each with his particular weakness. If Rudnev's approach had been more formal and less individual, then these weaknesses might only have developed. Rudnev, however, rallied these men to a united body unconditionally and self-

lessly fulfilling their duty to their country, their people and each other.

Yet when the interests of battle were at stake Rudnev could be implacable.

On a certain occasion, in fulfillment of Stalin's orders, the partisans set out on a raid to the Dnieper. Kovpak himself supervised all the preparations, inspected every cart, ordered and begged the men not to make a sound as the enemy was only fifty meters away to the left. And at that moment, a German baggage train with casks of pure alcohol is held up by one of the partisan outposts. The commander of the outpost rides whooping into the camp to inform the partisans of the booty. And in half-an-hour's time the camp is agog with drunken men, singing and shooting into the air.

The commissar was absent while this occurred. But when he returns we see a new, absolutely unknown Rudnev.

"On hearing what had happened, he caught the culprit (the commander of the outpost) by the collar and shouted in his face, practically breathless with rage: 'You deserve to be shot, you scoundrell!'" Rudnev looked as though he himself had suffered a terrible insult. He had not been so upset when Karpenko threatened to shoot him. But this action was of far-reaching consequence for the detachment as a whole: the drunken noise forced the command to change the entire tactics of the raid, which had been planned so as to reach the Dnieper without fighting.

The second instance is a tragic one. There was a certain company commander, a brave soldier, who had joined Kovpak already in 1942, bringing with him his Communist Party membership card and the Order of the Red Banner, both of which he had managed to save while making his way through the German police outposts. Now this man had been given orders to blow up a bridge in order to protect the partisan columns from the Germans; but he had spent the night in a nearby village, drinking with his cronies, and had failed to carry out the mission entrusted to him. The enemy's motor lorries, infantry and tanks crossed the bridge. The offender was such a brave and lovable fellow that even Kovpak, usually merciless in such cases, hesitated. But Rudnev was implacable. He himself dictated the order for the execution, himself unpinned the Order from the condemned man's coat, was present himself when the sentence was carried into effect.

"That night the column left the village for a 60-km. march through the steppes to the Radomysl forests near Kiev. As I rode past the commissar's cart, I glanced at him, and by the light of the rising moon I saw the tears streaming down his face," writes Vershigora.

The lives of the men who were in his charge and who trusted him were in danger. Rudnev did not consider, therefore, that he had the right to reprieve the offender, although he loved him and wept for him.

Vershigora constantly emphasizes this high moral approach to the life of the individual and the community. And following Vershigora himself, as a character in his own book, we see how his own nature changes, how he himself reaches a deeper understanding of human compassion during the years which he spent with Kovpak's detachment.

Fighting and working under Rudnev's guidance, entering more and more deeply into the life and struggle of the people, which demanded quick and accurate decisions to be taken on his own responsibility every hour, Vershigora learned to pay profound attention to individuals. His feeling of responsibility grew, not only for himself and his subordinates but for everything that happened in the regions in which the partisans operated. Vershigora arrived at the conclusion that only faith in the people, which is propagated by the Communist Party, could lead to victory in the war that was being fought for all humanity.

The author discusses a number of social-moral problems that arose in the tense atmosphere of struggle in the enemy rear. One of the most important of these was the attitude to people who had been cut off in the villages in the German rear or had escaped from German captivity. A formal solution would have been the simplest: "You did not make your way out of encirclement, you lived unmolested under the Germans—there is nothing more to be said," and the man or woman would be automatically excluded from Soviet society. But in reality things were not so simple. The book cites the case of a young sapper, an 18-year-old Red Army man who had remained behind in one of the villages. He spent his time demining the fields that the peasants' cows might graze in safety.

The peasants were glad to pay him for his services, and he began to take orders, establishing a payment of eighty kilograms of grain for every demined field. When Kovpak proposed that he join the partisans, the following conversation took place:

"I've been a partisan longer than you, granddad. I'm a lone partisan. I've blown up five German trucks."

"What sort of a partisan are you?" said Kovpak. "You're a speculator! You take eighty kilograms of grain from the peasants for every demined field."

"But that's only for my work in the daytime, when I demine the fields. But when I mine the roads, I do it for nothing. And that is dangerous work. But I don't take anything for it. . . And you say I'm a speculator."

As Vershigora tells us this nameless Russian boy had become known to thousands of partisans in the course of two or three years—partisans of the Bryansk forests, of Chernigov region, of Polesseye. With his help Hitler's machines and tanks flew into the air, later trains were derailed.

Such cases forced Vershigora to arrive at the following conclusion:

"Our attitude to a man should be determined by his actions in the rear and not by his mere presence there. A man must be judged by a clean and stern measure, by his actions, and not by the place in which he performed them. Let them come to the judgement of the people, the prisoners, the fugitives, the workers of the Urals, the healthy, able-bodied men who ran to Aktyubinsk and Tashkent, and the heroic men and women who made tanks under the open sky in winter frosts. Let them come and we shall ask them 'What did you do for victory? Are there traces of your work, your tears and your blood in her crown of thorns?'"

That is how men with a clear conscience think about the war. They do not boast of their sufferings or their exploits, they do not consider that the people owe them a debt for their services, that they are called upon to decide the fate of the nation. Kovpak's military-partisan ethics can be expressed in one phrase: "We must do as the people wish." And this principle made his detachment elusive and invincible, a true terror to the Germans. All the thoughts and actions of Kovpak and the commanders of his famous partisan detachments are permeated by profound esteem for the people. It is sufficient to recall Rudnev's attitude to the people. The tommy gunner Volodya Zebolov had lost both hands in the Finnish war; yet he still fought against the Germans, manipulating his gun with the aid of a clumsy claw made for him by a surgeon from the elbow joint. But even in conversation with this hero of heroes Rudnev reminds him of the respect due to the working people in the rear:

"It seems to me," he says, "that for men with a clear conscience in wartime it is easiest to be at the front." In reply to Volodya's feeble protest, he continues: "The greatest sufferers from war are of all inanimate objects—glass, of all animals—horses, and of all people—women and the workers in the rear. . . The mother, who has four or five hungry children at home and works from morning till night making cartridges, bread and shirts for you, is a hero before whom you should kneel, Volodya. . . And none of your military heroism can raise you above her. . ."

The Communist Party, through hundreds and thousands of such Rudnevs, educated the masses of the people in the spirit of clarity and of a consistent democracy which does not permit any retrogression which the enemy might be able to take hold of in order to break up the ideological unity which holds our people together. The integral nature and consistency of this democracy made the participation of the Soviet Union in World War II something which determined in advance the utter defeat of German fascism and which would not tolerate a peace which meant any sort of compromise. Economic and military forces superior to those of the enemy were built up because the country was able to depend on the strength of will of a united people. Only peace aims that are beneficial to and desired by the whole people and are not in any way distorted by an effort to use the war in the interests of social groups that are opposed to the people as a whole can lead to the complete eradication of fascism.

Kovpak's detachments, fighting in the deep rear of the German troops, did not see the newspapers reporting the disputes and discussions about Mikhailovich's četniks and similar anti-democratic groups in Greece and other countries. But the partisans themselves met with similar abominable facts.

Convinced that their armed forces could not suppress the wrath of the people, which flamed throughout the Ukraine and Belorussia, the Germans instigated a sanguinary provocation. They formed sham partisan detachments from amongst the Ukrainian nationalists and fascists who, loudly proclaiming their pretended desire to fight against the

Germans, began to massacre and burn entire Polish villages. In answer to the Polish population's prayers for protection, the German authorities declared that they could only help with arms and that only on condition that the Poles joined their police and put on a Schutzmann's uniform. The Poles were forced to consent to this base role. Stupefied by nationalistic prejudices, they did not understand the situation and instead of directing their hatred against the German organizers of the shambles, they let it loose on the peaceful Ukrainian population. Thus, the Ukrainian-Polish massacres broke out in which both peoples served the ends of their enslavers. The Soviet partisans had to defend both the Ukrainians and the Poles.

The leaders of the Soviet partisans understood how to distinguish those who were blinded by prejudice from conscious enemies. Of great interest in this respect is the conversation between Kovpak and two commanders of Ukrainian nationalist detachments.

By a few questions and replies Kovpak was able to distinguish the peasant boy, ignorant, but full of hatred for the Germans, from the political adventurer who muttered ready phrases about "Moscow imperialism". Kovpak could do this because he himself was a representative of the people, and understood the soul of the people and what was going on amongst the masses that had been drawn into this grim and complicated struggle.

The partisans also met with sham "anti-fascists" of another type.

A certain scouting detail sent by Vershigora to a Polish village disappeared, and was never heard of again. Only six months later it appeared that the detail had been wiped out by a Polish detachment, stationed in the vicinity of the village. "The leaders of this detachment arrived from London at the end of 1942: they were dropped from an airplane somewhere near Lublin. Having mobilized officers of the Polish army, who had not been able to defend their country against the Germans in 1939, the detachment set out towards the east. What did they want, these men who came to the forests of Zhitomir region in chrome and kid leather boots, in smart breeches, and with coquettish little white birds on their four-cornered caps? . . . The first thing that they did was to shoot all the Polish Communists in the Soviet-Polish villages, and then they threatened the population that a similar fate was in store for all who disobeyed them. Their second step was to enter into negotiations with "Taras Bulba," the ataman of the Ukrainian nationalist*. Who commanded these troops? In London . . . Sosnkowski, in Lublin—Major Zomb, in Staraya Guta (the village in which the Soviet detail was wiped out)—Captain Wuiiko.

Such were the representatives of Polish statehood, alien to their people, not recognized by them.

The liberation of Poland from the yoke of Hitlerism by the people themselves suited these Polish reactionaries still less than a foreign invasion. Their chief thought was to succeed in suppressing all the vital forces in the Polish people before the allied troops defeated Germany. Only by such crimes could they hope to regain their lost power over their own people. And they proved most effective allies of that same fascist Germany against which they were allegedly fighting.

Those, whom Petro Vershigora called "People With a Clear Conscience," did not only then selves wage a consistent, implacable fight against fascism; they were always able, quickly and correctly, to distinguish allies from enemies, even when these enemies were in the ranks of the allies. Their true allegiance to the people gave them this perspicacity.

"We must do what the people wish," said Kovpak.

We find examples of how this principle was carried out at every step in the pages of this book.

The Soviet people fought, firm in the conviction that all the bloodshed, all the immeasurable sacrifices, of which the peoples of the West had no idea, were necessary for the triumph of truth and justice. The Soviet soldier knew that when the enemy was defeated, he, the soldier-hero, would not be sent to conquer any foreign country. He knew, that wherever he came on earth he would come as a liberator and would be welcomed as a friend by the people. This knowledge was the source of his unprecedented heroism. This knowledge was the source of the belief, that never for a moment left the Soviet people, that a German victory was out of the question, that all, even the grimmest failures and defeats were but transient, that the people are deathless and their will unconquerable.

Vershigora describes how a group of scouts came to a local peasant woman, who knew all the roads and was accustomed to guide Soviet soldiers out of encirclement, i. e., to the east. The scouts asked her to show them the opposite way, and in reply to her question, where they were going to, one of them answered angrily: "To Berlin."

In no way confused, the woman began to reel off the directions:

"I'll tell you, when you reach Keimowcew, you go as far as Klimovtser, turn to the right and you will see a bridge across the Desna, and when you cross the bridge turn to the left, and follow the road all the way to Berlin."

"This was in October, 1942," adds Vershigora. "Understand that, comrades?"

And it is essential for everybody to understand this.

Thus, Vershigora's book, a monument to Soviet partisan heroes, is also a concrete moral guide to action in war and peace. It is one of those books that leaves a lasting impression on the reader.

ELENA USIEVICH

SOVIET CLASSICS' SELECTED WORKS

Alexander Serafimovich. *Selected Works*. State Literary Publishing House. Moscow. 566 pages.

The contemporary writer Alexander Serafimovich may well be regarded as a classic author of Soviet literature. His popularity in the Soviet Union is nothing less than extraordinary and his Civil War novel, *The Iron Flood*, has been translated into nearly all European languages and is well known to readers abroad.

The State Literary Publishing House in Moscow recently released a large volume of Serafimovich's best works. Born in 1863, Serafimovich began his career as a writer long before the October Revolution. His first story *On an Ice Floe* (1888) was written in the Far North where he had been exiled by the tsarist government for revolutionary activities.

In this, his first story, Serafimovich described the whale hunter Soroka who perished amid the ice rather than abandon his quarry and make for the safety of shore. As in other of his early tales, Serafimovich invokes the spectre of starvation facing the unfortunate toiler, compelling him to risk his life again and again for the sake of a mere pittance.

Of the works Serafimovich wrote before 1917 the volume includes his stories *The Signalman*, *The Little Miner*, *The Bombs*, *Forest Life*, *The Sands* and others.

In these stories Serafimovich depicts the terrible inequality to which the people oppressed by the tsarist government were subjected. The workers Semishkura (from the story *Semishkura*) and Nikita (from the story *Nikita*) are thrown out when their labour is no longer needed by the masters. The utter defencelessness of the workers in the face of tsarist law, the boorish arrogance and stupidity of the tsarist executive is fully exposed. The unfortunate Antip, a latrine cleaner who stowed away on a steamer, was tormented to death by the crew on the captain's orders (from the story *The Stowaway*). Inhuman exploitation caused the death of the signalman whose family subsequently was refused assistance by his superiors in accordance with callous tsarist law (from the story *The Signalman*).

While describing the bitter lot of the working people under tsarism, Serafimovich introduced the progressive fighters for a better future, the men and women whom he saw during the Russian Revolution of 1905. The story *The Precipice* vividly depicts a revolutionary who fled from his town where an insurrection had been suppressed and escaped the gendarmes with the aid of two watchmen who sheltered him. *The Dawn* describes an insurrection of the peasants burning the estates of the cruel landowners.

A. Serafimovich's talent reached full maturity in Soviet times. *The Iron Flood*, his masterpiece, was written in 1924.

This is a grand canvas of the Soviet people's struggle for power against the forces of the counter-revolution. The action is laid in the Kuban and tells of the heroic campaign of the Taman army in 1918. Serafimovich master-

fully illustrated how the forces of the Soviet armies arose in the course of the great struggle, how they spontaneously absorbed the peasant masses whose unorganized partisan detachments turned into spirited and well disciplined regular troops forming a mighty flood of iron which descended upon and routed the enemies of the young republic.

The chief character of this book is Kozhukh, a man of iron will, single in his purpose and possessing the endurance and initiative of the model commander. Kozhukh is more than a gifted army leader, however. He proves himself a brilliant educator and trainer of those motley masses of men who drifted into the army of the Taman under various circumstances.

The Iron Flood, holding the chief place in the Selected Works, owes its special significance to the fact that Serafimovich endowed this story with profound social meaning and emphasized that the force of the Soviet people fighting for justice is invincible. There is that same conception of the invincibility and inflexible courage of the Soviet fighter in the later stories about the struggle against the German invaders. The series of stories belonging to that period (*The Child*, *The Southern Army*, *Happy Day*, *On the Cutter*) fully attest to Serafimovich's remarkable talent, unwaning despite his advanced age.

DICKENS' BIOGRAPHY

Evgeni Lann. *Dickens*. State Literary Publishing House. Moscow. 530 pages.

The life of Dickens is known to Russian readers from numerous biographies by Russian and foreign authors. In the Soviet Union, the works of Dickens have been published in editions of hundreds of thousands and the great English novelist therefore has millions of Soviet readers.

The book on Dickens, produced by the Soviet author Evgeni Lann this year, is the fruit of long years of study of biographical and autobiographical material on Dickens, his letters, speeches, reminiscences relevant to him and numerous historical and literary documents about his life and writings.

Reviewing the life of Dickens, step by step, his gradual transformation from reporter to author, E. Lann reveals the development of Dickens' world outlook as an artist and citizen of his country. Dickens' life is indivisible from his work. Quoting the words of the Russian historian Klyuchevsky, E. Lann in his preface declares that "the principal biographical facts in the life of a scientist and a writer are books, outstanding events and ideas." Constructing his story accordingly, he carefully studied the realism of the English master and decisively refutes those biographers who have attempted to present Dickens as a romantic.

E. Lann links the biography of the English writer closely to the story of his works, the birth of his ideas, the conception of his themes and characters. Supported by a wealth of material, he illustrates how the fate of the writer was connected with that of his characters.

Very convincingly E. Lann shows that Dickens, whom the great Russian critic Chernyshevsky called "the champion of the lower classes against the upper classes, the castigator of lies and hypocrisy," was at times compelled to bend his art to the pressure of the book market and in the concluding chapters of his works, for example, to cater to prevailing taste.

Evgeni Lann presents a comprehensive idea of Dickens as a citizen and in this sense the finest pages of his book are those describing Dickens' first trip to the United States and the fruits of that journey—his *American Notes* and *Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*. In these works Dickens comes forth as the implacable foe of slavery and discrimination against Negroes. Openly and wrathfully he exposes the shady sides of American bourgeois progress with its wolf laws governing the struggle for existence. When reading Lann's book, however, one realizes that Dickens' social and world outlook developed along complex and paradoxical lines. The democratic ideas in his works, for example, are reconciled to the rejection of the Chartist program.

Since Lann's book is based on documentary material it is difficult to perceive the line of demarcation between the "truth" and "fiction" in a descriptive biography of this sort. But everything of importance concerning Dickens as a man and artist conforms faithfully to the documentary sources.

This analysis of the works of Dickens and particularly of the history of their conception, development and transitions will help the reader to gain a clearer idea of Dickens' world outlook and the principal artistic tendencies of his writing.

The author of this biography has not considered it necessary to give a detailed account of the personal drama of Dickens' life (his separation from his wife). "The material on this question is insufficient," says Lann in his preface. "To fill in such gaps it would be necessary to resort to imagination, to describe the actions of persons whose identity Dickens did not want to disclose in his time and of whom nothing is known but their names."

One may safely say that this new work has justified the hopes of its author and indeed introduces the reader to the "real, living Dickens."

A NEW HISTORICAL NOVEL

Olga Forsh. *Mikhailovsky Castle*. Soviet Writer Publishing House. Moscow. 324 pages.

The title of Olga Forsh's new historical novel is *Mikhailovsky Castle*, the name of the famous old St. Petersburg palace erected for Paul I by the architects Bazhenov and Brenna at the close of the 18th century. Paul I lived in the palace little more than a month when he was murdered as the result of a court conspiracy.

Though he occupies a place of importance in the novel, the monarch is not its central figure. The hero is the young architect Carlo Rossi, who was to become one of the chief builders of the Russian capital. One might indeed say that the heroes of the book are the architects of Petersburg since much of it is devoted to the architectural ensembles of the times,

descriptions of individual buildings and monuments, to discussions of the artists and architects about the things they had created and the things they were yet to create. Other prominent characters, aside from Rossi, are the architects Andrei Voronikhin, and Vassili Bazhenov. Between them, they represented three generations of Russian architects in the 18th century. Bazhenov, for example, sadly recalls his unattained ideas for the construction of the Kremlin and Tsaritsyn palaces in Moscow. Voronikhin is working on the project of the Kazan Cathedral in Petersburg, while Rossi is as yet a student, gradually developing his creative individuality.

As the plot unfolds these historical figures commune with characters conceived by the author. Rossi's young comrade, the artist Mitya Sverlov, is affianced to Masha, a serf-girl who dances in the court theatre. She is separated from her lover and threatened with the fate of becoming the mistress of a rich dilettante. Nearly all the artists mentioned in the book intervene in this tragedy, not uncommon in that period. The fate of Mitya and Masha, in their minds, is identified with the fate of the arts which must be wrested from the power of the moneyed and despotic dilettantes.

Mitya Sverlov's departure to join the army of Suvorov, then waging the Italian campaign against Napoleon, gave the author the opportunity to describe the great Russian general. This portrait of one of the most remarkable men of the 18th century, a portrait, moreover, that is invariably difficult to achieve, is indeed one of the highlights of the book. Suvorov's portrait, perhaps, has never before been drawn with such vitality and conviction.

The book concludes with a turning point in history: Paul I is murdered by the officers of the Guard. Alexander I ascends the throne, but the social and political contradictions in the country are not alleviated.

The young heroes of the book attain maturity. Rossi applies himself to his ideas. Mitya Sverlov, who has lost his right arm in the war, is increasingly engrossed by social questions and abandons art. To unite with her beloved Mitya, Masha too must sacrifice her art.

The fate of these characters will form the subject of Olga Forsh's next book, a continuation of *Mikhailovsky Castle*.

A BOOK ABOUT A RUSSIAN TRAVELLER

Vyacheslav Samoilov. *Semyon Dezhnev and His Times*. Publishing House of the Northern Sea Route. Moscow. 112 pages.

A book by the late bibliographer V. Samoilov, an eminent authority on Siberia, was recently published in Moscow. *Semyon Dezhnev and His Times* is the story of the Cossack traveller who was the first to discover the strait between Asia and America in 1648. The strait was subsequently named after Vitus Bering, who headed the Russian geographical expedition which rediscovered the passage in 1728. The name of Semyon Dezhnev, however, has been conferred upon the easternmost cape of Asia, belonging to the Soviet Union.



Illustration to the book Semyon Dezhnev and His Times

Samoilov's life of Dezhnev is based on documents. Dezhnev was an outstanding figure even among the 17th century Cossack colonizers, men of exceptional valour and endurance. There was always something purposeful and planned in his dogged determination.

Dezhnev's voyage was an extremely dangerous venture and cost the lives of most of his shipmates. Without realizing the importance of his discovery, he wrote an account of his journey in 1655 and sent it to St. Petersburg where it lay in the dust of the archives for eighty years. It was only in 1736, after Bering had rediscovered the strait, that the document was unearthed and examined by the historian Miller who, two decades later in 1758, proclaimed Dezhnev's priority in an article written for the periodical, *Writings and Translations for Edification and Amusement*.

It is interesting to note that attempts were subsequently made to deny Dezhnev's achievements. The American historian Golder in his book *Russian Expansion on the Pacific* sought to cast doubt on the Cossack's voyage, referring to the arguments of the poorly informed Siberian historian Slotsov at the beginning of the 19th century. V. Samoilov devotes a chapter to the discussion of both Slotsov's and Golder's points of view and convincingly refutes their conclusions.

Samoilov's book is illustrated with reproductions of the old maps and charts, engravings and drawings depicting Siberia in the times of Semyon Dezhnev.

RUSSIAN LANDSCAPE PAINTERS OF XVIIIth CENTURY

Alexei Fyodorov-Davydov. *Semyon Shchedrin. Silvester Shchedrin*. Art Publishing House. Moscow.

Two pocket editions on the Russian landscape painters Semyon and Silvester Shchedrin, of the second half of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, by Professor Alexei Fyodorov-Davydov were recently released by Art Publishing House.

Semyon Shchedrin was a pioneer in landscape painting in Russia.

The author analyzes 18th-century Russian landscape painting before Semyon Shchedrin's time and emphasizes its decorative style. Landscapes typical of the period contained imaginary ruins, boulders and trees decoratively combined to please the eye, a harmonious disposition of forms, lines and points. "Beginning with the seventies of the 18th century, the penchant for austere harmony and almost geometric decorative art yielded to an urge for 'poetic confusion' in landscapes. The regular, symmetrical park gave way to the 'landscape park' and its lone meditative stroller."

Semyon Shchedrin may be said to have played the same role in Russian painting as Karamzin did in Russian literature.

"In his idealized park landscapes," remarks A. Fyodorov-Davydov, "he discovered a new path to a fresh understanding of the beauty and poesy of reality, of the world of nature that surrounds us."

Briefly describing the early years and student days of Semyon Shchedrin, the author passes on to the artist's travels. These were made at the end of the sixties when, as a student of the Art Academy he received a medal and was sent abroad to continue his studies.

On his return, Shchedrin was commis-



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Cover for the book Semyon Shchedrin

sioned by "Her Majesty's cabinet" to paint scenes of the palaces and gardens.

Shchedrin found his orientation in the eighties and nineties when he painted landscapes displaying a new, poetical, though as yet imaginative appreciation of nature.

Silvester Shchedrin was not fated to live long (1791-1830) and the period of his best work covered a mere six-seven years spent in Rome before his death.

Springing from the Shchedrin family of artists, he was the son of a sculptor, nephew of a landscape painter and brother of an architect, he was attracted to painting from childhood and was sent to the Petersburg Academy of Arts at the age of nine. Young Silvester was especially drawn to landscape painting. His teachers were Matvei Ivanov and Thomas de Thomon, two important figures in Russian art at the beginning of the 19th century. His views, moreover, were influenced by Fyodor Alexeyev, one of the early Russian landscape painters.

Graduating from the Academy in 1811, Silvester Shchedrin received a gold medal for his painting *Petrousky Island*.

His first letters from Italy in 1818 revealed his love for the realistic expression of life and nature. This too determined his point of view when appraising the works of the old masters in the art galleries of the West.

Shchedrin's decisive step toward realism was his *New Rome* series of 1823-1825. "This is a portrayal of the humdrum daily life of the city," remarks A. Fyodorov-Davydov, "of the boats on the river and the figures of the inhabitants in the foreground. These people, moreover, are not posing but going about their usual affairs. Shchedrin, therefore, is not looking at Rome as an archeologist or historian enamoured of the ancient classics, but merely recording the scenes that struck him, as it were, from the point of view of a citizen. . . Finding beauty in that which is plain and ordinary, he discovers a new intimate and personal approach to his subject."

There was a corresponding change in his means of expression. Instead of building up his composition in planes, he attempts to convey the idea of unity in space, emphasizing it by unity in light and shade. This is how Shchedrin succeeded with his "al-fresco" treatment of tonal painting.

In 1825-1827, Shchedrin produced a series of seascapes (*Sorrento Harbour*, *Capri* and others). Omitting the rolling billows of the high seas, his seascapes disclose still waters cosily enveloped in their little worlds where life pursues a simple course. Pervaded with air and light, these al-fresco works of the artist were far in advance of the West-European landscape painting of his time.

Not limiting himself to tonal painting, the artist strives for sonority of colour, picturesque vitality. This, too, was an innovation with which he outstripped his contemporaries.

"The works of Shchedrin," concludes the author, "brilliantly reflected the discovery of the live nature which is one of the finest qualities of romanticism. Shchedrin was the first Russian painter to depict the happiness, harmony and perfection to be found in nature by man."



Cover for monograph on Constable

ENGLISH LANDSCAPE PAINTER

Marina Orlova, *John Constable*. Art Publishing House. Moscow. 31 pages.

Dealing with the life and work of John Constable, the monograph dwells on his main works, his views on painting and particularly on landscapes. M. Orlova emphasizes the role of Constable in the development of realistic landscape painting in Europe and his special merit in that he combined the scope of the classic landscapes of the 17th century with the simple realism of the Dutch artists while ridding the first element of its conventional pomposity and the second of its excessively prosaic character. M. Orlova also stresses the artist's links with the people, due to his social origin, his tastes and sympathies.

Describing how the Russian artists of the time were impressed by Constable's paintings, M. Orlova tells how delighted the writer Dmitri Grigorovich was with Constable's work when he visited the London art galleries in 1862. He expressed the view that Constable was superior to Turner and the other English landscape painters of the romantic school. "It is all done in rich tones, amply, accurately and yet with that indistinctness which we see in nature where the contours seem to melt away in air and light," wrote Grigorovich. Describing one of the usual Constable subjects, he remarked that "nothing could seem more simple," but that for all its artlessness the painting embodied all characteristic features of the typical English landscape.

M. Orlova cites the praise lavished on Constable by the famous Russian art critic Vladimir Stasov and the eminent landscape painter Alexei Savrasov.

The book describes a Constable etude (*Distant View of Salisbury Cathedral*) in the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum in Moscow.

A LITERARY PILGRIMAGE

Nikolai Antsiferov. The Environs of Leningrad. Published by the State Literary Museum. Moscow. 112 pages.

The book under review is the first of a large series of publications, the Russian title of which is *Literary Places*.

Many an outstanding Russian man of letters, from Lomonosov to our contemporaries, has gained his inspiration from the beauty and the grandeur of the world famous environs of Leningrad—those great treasure-houses of Russian art.

Foremost among them is the town of Pushkin—formerly Tsarskoye Selo. The little town, named "The Parnassus of Russian Poetry", received its present name in honour of the fact that it witnessed the first flowerings of Pushkin's poetical genius.

But Pushkin was not the first poet whose attention was attracted by the beauties of Tsarskoye Selo—its splendid palace, one of Rastrelli's greatest creations, its hanging gardens, its parks, planned by Catherine the Great as a "Pantheon of Russian Glory."

The solemn beauty of Tsarskoye Selo, built on the same strict classical lines as the sonorous

poetry of the 18th century—is the object of many a poem and essay from the pen of Lomonosov, Derzhavin, Bogdanovich, Karamzin, Dmitriyev.

An excellent connoisseur of the 19th century and the days of Pushkin, N. Antsiferov shows in detail the importance of Tsarskoye Selo in the literary and artistic life of the first quarter of the 19th century.

Nikolai Karamzin, the historian and poet, engrossed at that time in work on his *History of the Russian State*, lived in a small house on picturesque Sadovaya Street, at a stone's throw from the palace.

"... Here," writes N. Antsiferov, "he was visited by most of the eminent men of letters of that day. Among his guests were the poet Vyazemsky, author of poems describing winter in Tsarskoye Selo, Constantine Batyushkov, the outstanding classical scholar, Alexander Turgenev, poet and revolutionary, and Pyotr Chaadaye, a Hussar captain and philosopher. Young Pushkin, a pupil of the neighbouring Lycée, was a frequent visitor." Tsarskoye Selo often saw Gnedich, the famous translator of *The Iliad*, who loved the place because of its many reminders of the age of classicism, so dear to his heart, "grandfather" Krylov, the creator of the Russian fable, and Alexander Griboyedov, who was here for the last time just before his fateful journey to Persia.

Pushkin began writing while a pupil of the Lycée in Tsarskoye Selo; Antsiferov shows how again and again he returns in his poems to his Tsarskoye Selo "fatherland," as he was wont to call it. The young poet became the bard of its grand buildings and rustic beauties, its parks and monuments, lakes and meadows.

The Patriotic War of 1812, in which all Russia united against the invader, stirred the hearts of the Lycée pupils. At the graduation ceremony in January 1815, at which Derzhavin was present, Pushkin recited his poem *Memories of Tsarskoye Selo*, in which he described with great feelings their emotions in that turbulent year, their flaming patriotism, their envious glances at the soldiers marching to battle past their windows.

"Lycée days" is one of Pushkin's favourite themes—we find it in a number of poems, in *Memories* (December 14, 1829), in *Eugene Onegin* and in letters to his friends.

The birthplace of Pushkin's poetry became a shrine for every Russian poet, and Antsiferov shows us how this tradition made itself felt in the works of Zhukovsky, Vyazemsky, Tyutchev, Apukhtin, Annensky and the Soviet writers Alexei Tolstoy, Vyacheslav Shishkov, Constantine Fedin, Vsevolod Rozhdestvensky and others.

Deeply moving are the pages describing the barbaric destruction of the town of Pushkin by the fascist bandits. For 860 days the Hitlerites ravished the beautiful town—only formless heaps of rubble are left to mark the sites of its splendid palaces and parks. Ruins stand on the sites of the palace of Catherine the Great—that wonderful creation of Russian 18th-century art.

Terrible is the destruction wrought in the romantic town of Pavlovsk, the "melancholy



The statue of Pushkin at the Lycée in the town of Pushkin

beauty" of which inspired several of Zhukovskiy's finest elegies. An architectural masterpiece, described by Dostoyevsky, painted by Ostroumova-Lebedeva, the town has been completely destroyed by the German hordes—its palace burnt down and its wonderful park, "where even every tree had its own place, like every note in a symphony," annihilated.

Petrodvorets (the former Peterhof), the "Eden" of Peter the Great, has been reduced to ashes. The magnificent fountains, the chief adornment of the brilliant festivals described in Lermontov's, Fyodor Glinka's and Ogarev's poems, Malinsky's novels and Herzen's essays—have disappeared.

... As we follow Antsiferov over the world-famous environs of Leningrad, as we read his vivid narrative of the great past of these peerless masterpieces of art, all the dearer to us because of their close ties with Russia's greatest poets and writers, we shudder at the monstrous vandalism of the German fascists who wantonly and brutally destroyed these priceless treasures, ranking among the greatest, created by human genius.

The grandeur of these monuments of Leningrad's past and their tragic fate at the hands of fascist barbarians—these are the impressions to be gained from reading N. Antsiferov's book. And from reading it we understand all the better the gigantic task of reconstruction, which faces our country, and the no less gigantic task of averting a new war, which could endanger the safety of masterpieces of art in other cities and other lands.

RUSSIAN PHYSIOLOGY

Khachatur Koshtoyants. *Essays on the History of Physiology in Russia*. Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Moscow. Leningrad. 494 pages.

Pyotr Vassilievich Posnikov, the first Russian physiologist, received the degree of PH. D. and MD. in 1695, at the famous university of Padua, where William Harve, the founder of physiology, studied at the beginning of the 17th century.

Though circumstances compelled Posnikov to devote himself to diplomacy instead of "killing live dogs and bringing dead ones to life," as he put it, he may be justly regarded as the first Russian physiologist and the year of 1695, therefore, be set down as approximating the birth of Russian physiology.

Russian physiology, two and a half centuries old, has contributed many a fascinating

page to the history of knowledge. *Essays on the History of Physiology in Russia*, a voluminous work by the eminent Soviet physiologist Kh. Koshtoyants, was published recently by the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. The author has already written a number of books on this subject, including works on the great Russian physiologists Ivan Sechenov and Ivan Pavlov.

The history of Russian physiology is treated by Koshtoyants in close connection with the development of philosophy. The names of Radishchev, Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky and other Russian thinkers appear in his book together with those of numerous Russian physiologists.

"As represented by its founder Ivan Sechenov, the Russian school of physiology," he remarks, "developed in accordance with the ideas cultivated by the philosophers and enlighteners Alexander Herzen and Nikolai Chernyshevsky in the 40's and 50's of the 19th century. . . Without Radishchev, Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky and Pisarev, who posed and solved the problem of the unity of physical and psychical processes, it would be difficult to imagine the formation of those ideas which paved the way for Russian physiology."

Particularly interesting are the chapters dealing with the pre-Sechenov development of physiology in Russia. Far less is known of that period than of the brilliant finales of the 19th and 20th centuries. Physiology in Russia, however, received serious attention as far back as the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries when it made important contributions to world science.

Many pages of the book, naturally, are devoted to Sechenov. The author was fortunately able to use and publish for the first time various archive material on this subject including valuable letters of Sechenov.

After reviewing the works of Sechenov and Pavlov, Koshtoyants goes on to the main spheres of Russian physiology. These chapters deal with scientific victories in our country, and the contributions made to world science by N. Vvedensky, A. Ukhomsky, A. Samoilov, V. Chagovets, P. Lazarev, A. Kulyabko, N. Mislavsky, E. London, K. Bukov, L. Orbeli and other eminent scientists. Their efforts have long been acknowledged by the world. Professor Joseph Barcroft of Cambridge, one of the greatest of contemporary physiologists, has stated that world physiology owes a great debt to Russian science.

NEW CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF THE
MUSICAL SCALE

The art of music recognizes sounds of a definite pitch, the only exception being certain percussion instruments and those achieving sound effects. From these sounds, at different historical periods and among different peoples, scales were built up, that is, fundamental systems in which sounds were given permanent connection and relation in accordance with a definite law. Scales characterize the style of any given time and country. Nevertheless in spite of all their regularity, the rules of the scale offer practically unlimited room for both folk and professional art. The use of the 19th-century scales, for example, did not prevent Richard Wagner, Frederic Chopin and Franz Liszt from writing such highly individual and varied music.

Changes in social and historical conditions give rise to changes in the mental and emotional content of art and soon affect the system of scales in music. The old are discarded and new systems come into being. The old systems do not disappear without leaving a trace, but become an element of the new, and new significance is ascribed to them. It is only a very rough approximation, for instance, where we say that the conceptions of the "scale in major" and the "scale in minor" can be regarded as unchanging. Theoreticians who insist on the "immutability" of scales must resort to sophisms in order to deny the vital difference between the "majors" of Bach, Mozart, Handel, Beethoven, Glinka, Chopin, Mussorgsky, Chaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin and Ravel. Such an attempt to immortalize esthetic laws, is reminiscent of the efforts of formalistic historians of literature to bury in the word "novel" the fundamental artistic, historical and genre differences between *Daphnis and Chloe*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *War and Peace*.

We believe it would be equally wrong to ignore the historical changes in means and forms in art and to regard them as absolute. In the first instance history would come to a standstill, while in the second, it would be reduced to a meaningless conglomeration of conflicting facts. Art, like all spheres of human activity, undergoes the most profound changes; it is never created out of nothing. Whatever the field of activity, man retains whatever is progressive, and develops it further. Whatever was born of weak, reactionary elements tending to retard the social process is soon lost and forgotten.

The language of music has permanent attributes which have retained their meaning despite the alterations they have undergone all the way from the Chinese pentatonic scale especially often used in the Scotch folk tunes, through the ancient Greek scales, to our modern one. One attribute which has remained is the conformity of sound material, in other

words, the selection of a certain section of the whole mass of sounds existing in nature—i. e., those sounds included in all the musical works known to history.

In ancient times musicians were already occupied with the task of keeping a record of these sounds, of establishing their location on a graph, just as letters are used to denote the sounds of the spoken language. That was the beginning of the graph system which after going through a number of intermediate stages has developed into the present-day written notes. There is an essential difference, however, between the sounds of music and the spoken language; the exact pitch and length that are of little importance for sounds forming words, are fundamental qualities of music, without which no musical thought can be expressed. Some means had to be found to record them in written form. It was fairly easy to solve the problem of the duration of sound in time. But fixing the pitch, the main quality of musical sound, was more difficult. Long, long ago it was observed that as any given sound was raised by a certain number of intervals (increasing the number of vibrations of the sound wave to the second) or was lowered (reducing the number of vibrations), it was repeated in an analogous sound. This is what was subsequently to be called the "octave" (when the sounds recognized as the basic ones were given seven names). But how to divide up the sound interval between two notes of the octave into separate notes and how many were there to be? The reply was far from easy. The human voice, with very little effort, or the string instrument, by the slightest movement of the fingers on the strings, will furnish an endless number of notes varying in pitch. But do all of them belong to the fundamental elements of musical speech? If that were the case, there would be no such thing as "out of tune" or a "false note"; for these words refer to precisely those sounds which, although in themselves of a definite absolute pitch, are nevertheless foreign to music and contradictory to the permanent interrelations between the pitches inside the octave or at any rate, to these interrelations established in European music throughout the period of known history.

It would be useless to investigate the content of musical speech by limiting oneself to the physiological possibilities of the voice or the physical possibilities of any instrument. The only correct starting point for a theoretical basis, for selecting and graphically establishing the scale (that is, a series of sounds placed in order of pitch) is musical practice alone, which means the existing musical compositions. A physiological study of the voice and hearing apparatus, or an examination of sound from the physical point of view, or

that of acoustics, is only of subsidiary service to musical theory. For music is neither a purely instinctive physiological phenomenon nor is it part of the inanimate world of things; it is a branch of human, social culture. Music expresses the way in which reality is perceived and is part of man's active reaction to reality. In other words, music is a form of ideology, and to understand it one must look to its compositions as a whole, and not to scattered and separate parts isolated from the whole. Just by way of comparison, what would be said of a linguist who endeavoured to evolve a theory of language and its development that was based solely upon the structure and functions of the organs of speech and hearing? Or, still worse, what would be said of a historian of literature who tried through a study of anatomy and reflexes of the organs of speech and hearing to reach an understanding of Pushkin, Chaucer or Goethe?

Early attempts to establish a musical scale resulted from musical practice. Early efforts to lay the foundations of musical theory were simplified by the fact that in the spirit of all feudal ideology they considered only the canon forms of music, mainly the church-canon forms, into which the living and varied form of the folk song was able to penetrate only after being carefully distilled. On this basis several systems were worked out with varying numbers of tones to the octave; the authors of these systems were never able to agree with regard to the pitch of these tones. Still more attempts of this kind were made in the 15th and the early 16th centuries, when medieval scholasticism was on the verge of collapse and the new culture was beginning to take form (Arnolt Schlick in 1512, Antonio Foliani in 1529; Gioseffe Zarlino in 1558, and many others). Nearly all these scale systems were, generally speaking, haphazard, narrow and so clumsy that it proved difficult to apply them to practical music.

Finally, towards the end of the 17th century, Andreas Werckmeister proposed a system of tempering that divided the octave into twelve parts. The seven notes which are now the white keys on the piano were recognized as the basis of that theory. From their names were evolved the names of the other five keys, which were regarded as lower or higher variations of one of the closest basic notes. This system was well codified according to the best practical experience of the day and it soon received wide, and subsequently general recognition. It made it possible to perfect keyboard instruments, the forerunners of the piano, that had been in existence since the 15th century, to stabilize sounds corresponding to intervals in the keyboard that were convenient for the fingers. This offered fresh possibilities from the artistic and technical points of view, possibilities that had already been foreseen in the tempering of the spinet and clavictherium which were a definite advance despite the fact that they reduced the number of sounds in comparison with those that could be derived from the string and the human voice. It was, indeed, their limitation of tone that made them progres-

sive inventions. For if the octave had retained the number of notes more closely approaching the "pure" sequence of sounds, there would have been many more notes in it, with less opportunity for rapid execution or playing chords.

Johann Sebastian Bach called one of the most monumental and beautiful of his works *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier*, combining in it preludes and fugues written on all the notes of the octave of the new temperament. This discovery was of enormous significance. It revolutionized music for the keyed instruments and also enriched all other instruments, beginning with the human voice and their ensemble with the pianoforte took on the most highly developed form. At the same time the development of the theory of music was simplified too inasmuch as it had attained stable written form and fairly complete uniformity. For keyed instruments a scale with twelve notes was established. Generally speaking, the development of music which began in the 17th century would not have been possible without the twelve-toned temperament.

We hope that our reader will take our word with regard to certain propositions which in a short article cannot possibly be supported with sufficient historical data. Unquestionably, the determined efforts to establish a system of notes in the 16th and 17th centuries were not accidental. This system was not the haphazard creation of theoreticians; the practical musical art of the period which had developed from the canons of the middle ages and engulfed a more individual, many-sided and complex content required that system of expression. The new demands in art and esthetics reflected the social changes and gave rise to a search for new forms of art, a new theoretic basis of music, and a new technique of instrumentation.

But the relations between the content of art and the means by which it is expressed are far from simple and straightforward. The theory and technique of art, arising as they do from ideological necessity, influence the future form of this necessity. The means themselves begin to play a role in the formation of esthetic needs. So it was that the Werckmeister temperament had a powerful effect upon the development of musical consciousness and the conception of sound on the part of society. It is true, this temperament never gained undivided control of music. The singer or violinist who has a good ear for music involuntarily goes beyond the bounds of the twelve notes on the piano, in rendering the written notes he is reading; he enriches them with tones that do not exist in piano temperament. The result is that the voice and the string instrument give a more exact and expressive rendering of the melody; the logic of melodic thought is expressed more naturally and fully. And the composer, of course, listens to the music he has created not in the equal temperament of the piano but in the so-called pure scale. More than that, anyone with a properly developed appreciation for music (and not in the Conservatory class-

room alone—in the Russian or Ukrainian village where from childhood people are accustomed to sing both at work and during leisure hours and where all important events and personal experiences are accompanied by song, musical people are encountered much more frequently than in any music school)—a listener of that sort, without being aware of it, will make corrections in listening even to the piano. Be that as it may, the fact that we are accustomed to the notes of the piano and that training the musical ear at school is based to a large extent on the piano, has little by little deformed the ear both of the audience and musician, and even of the composer. Such keyboard instruments as the harmonica and accordion extended the influence of the twelve-note temperament in developing the musical ear of the population. The negative side of this remarkable discovery began to make itself felt. But for a long time little attention was paid to it.

It was not until the tempered scale had been in existence for a century and a half that the opinion arose that its role was not entirely beneficial, but to some extent harmful.

Here again we have a whole complex of cause and effect. The chief cause is far more profound than any of the existing methods of splitting up the octave.

Beginning with the second half of the 19th century, composers in Western Europe began to break away from folk art more and more. This process was due to social evolution; there was increasing antagonism between the ruling propertied classes and the working class which had begun to grow rapidly after the revolution of 1848. The specialist in the arts and letters came increasingly under the influence of the ruling strata of society, the monopolists of material wealth and education too, and thus moved farther and farther away from the people. In this social process music was not alone in its separation from the people; it suffered the same fate as literature, painting and the theatre.

Any art that is confined to a narrow social circle is bound to stagnate and this has a telling effect upon its means of expression. Certain colourful features in language disappeared at that time from a good part of the literature produced in the West; style became monotonous and various eccentricities were introduced that violated the unity of conception and showed that the artist had not the moral strength and vitality to resist trivialities. And in music the "modernists", for example, in their effort to break away from the general banality, were only able to attain a certain refinement and effectiveness, but not that which was natural and true. In the meantime, people began to protest against the twelve-note temperament on account of its dreary monotony.

Of course, even in this period of general decline, there were great artists who created works that were original and profound. But even a cursory examination of the history of art shows that all that is of true value in art was connected with the social protest

against the ruling bourgeois tendency in social and cultural development. This was especially pronounced in Russia at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, when there were great social upheavals.

The events of 1830 and 1848 gave rise to great musical productions of Chopin and Liszt, which was obviously bound up with the people. In Russia the beginning of the 19th century and the revolutionary movement of the progressive nobility to which Pushkin was close, had an influence on the musical conceptions of Glinka. The popular spirit of his art is as close to that of Pushkin, as it is possible for music to resemble literature. The revolutionary-democratic movement embraced wider sections of the people in the middle and latter part of the 19th century; in Russian literature this period produced Chernyshevsky and Leo Tolstoy; far more directly than their predecessors these writers dealt with the problems of life which affect people. Their younger contemporaries, Mussorgsky, Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov, differed from the progressive Russian composers of the early 19th century in that they had a more direct approach to the life of the people in their utilization of folk music, as well as in the choice of subject matter for their operas and romances. Litterateurs and musicians of the period turned to the collection and study of folklore. It is of interest that precisely in this period the founder of the Moscow Conservatory, Nikolai Rubinstein, a man of progressive social and esthetic views, together with the poet Odоеvsky, built a small piano that had 19 notes to the octave instead of 12. This instrument may be seen today in the museum of the Moscow Conservatory; unfortunately the strings have not held, and there are no documents to reveal the system by which this early instrument was strung. At any rate, it is noteworthy that the demand to revise the twelve-octave temperament, to select and establish a larger number of musical tones, in order to arrive at a closer understanding and mastery of the source of all great music—that is, the folk song was made in those circles where there was the greatest leaning towards folk music.

We have already recalled that at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, a wave of protest against the existing temperament with its limitations began to develop more widely both in Western Europe and in Russia. But, as the saying goes, two people who say the same words do not always think alike. And here too, not only those who were genuinely seeking for something new began to oppose the temperament in favour of more frequent intervals in the octave, but also those musicians who regarded the folk song merely as "exotic primitivism" and as material for formalistic experiments.

To these decadent musicians, to break up the tempered scale was approximately the same as for cubists to break up objects into cubes and intersecting planes with no regard whatever for natural form. The decadents sought "liberation" from the old tempera-

ment so they could do away entirely with the great classical traditions. They cast off as outmoded the art that had been called upon to express social content with the utmost clarity and force.

So we see that some musicians, progressive in their ideas (although for the most part lacking in a clear understanding of the social significance of their searching), started the struggle against the tempered scale in order to get closer to the people. At the same time others who were far removed from the masses of the people and haughtily regarded them as "the mob" from the heights of their "spiritual aristocracy"—they too waged the same struggle against the tempered scale on behalf of the empty, worthless theory of "art for art's sake." The tastes prevalent in the upper circles of capitalist society, naturally supported the decadents. Moreover, they were forced to this by the dominant philosophy of positivism with the esthetics which mechanically transferred to the realm of art the laws of and approach to the natural and technical sciences. In painting, art discarded nature for experiments in optics. In music the vital factors were discarded for experiments in acoustics.

In the West the "innovators" advocated first of all the "quarter of a tone" temperament, in other words, the division of the octave into twice as many notes as it formerly had. Here there was clearly a positivist approach to the problem; the theory had its origin not in music but in the physics-acoustics laboratory. A good many of the "systems" that were advanced at the beginning of the 20th century (and they are still being developed today) were of the same pseudo-scientific and anti-artistic character; their observations and conclusions lay outside the sphere of music itself.

Most interesting and fruitful (as regards its possibilities for the future) was the attention which Alexander Scriabin paid to the significance of the overtones—that is the series of tones which according to the laws of physics are harmonious of the fundamental tone; they change the character of the tone which produces them by sounding simultaneously with it. Scriabin obtained rich, sonorous sounds by making use of chords which produced a definite combination of overtones. However, he did not give his findings a theoretical basis.

For Soviet music the question of the "pure scale" is of particular interest. In this multinational country where national cultures develop intensively, monuments to the past and specimens of folk art are widely collected. This wealth of national culture is not the property of ethnographers and historians alone; it is a source of creative art for Soviet composers. And our music schools are striving to instill in future musicians an ability to appreciate various types of musical thought.

Soviet theoreticians are elaborating the problem of musical sound by various methods. There was a time when Professor Nikolai Garbuzov was a strong advocate of the physico-mathematical method; he collected a huge number of interesting acoustical experiments which, however, helped very little

in reaching the goal, as is the case with all positivist attempts in esthetics. In counter-distinction to Garbuzov, Professor Boleslav Yavorsky, author of the theory of "the rhythm of scales," employed the musical-historical approach. Yavorsky wrote an integral theory and an original history of musical styles, which analyzed the artistic material to discover the law of the rise and fall of different scale systems. When he analyzed the folk song and musical literature in general, Yavorsky came across many scales that had not yet been recorded; the most complex of them had 18 tones—a "physiological" or "pure" scale. Yavorsky's theory had, however, a vulnerable point in the very principle from which it was evolved; the author refers to the law of the receptivity of the human ear to sound, the result of the physiological structure of the ear (curved channels whose function, as physiologists have shown, is connected with a person's sense of balance). Yavorsky regards concrete musical styles as social-historical modifications of this law of receptivity. Though his theory is most attractively constructed, it is doubtful whether such a permanent factor as receptivity to sound can furnish a real explanation for the historically changing and varied types of musical thought.

Alexei Ogolevets in 1941 published *The Fundamentals of the Language of Harmony*. The author had been working for years on the problem of the "pure" scale and he had a splendid collaborator in the Moscow piano-builder and designer, Yakov Seletsky. The latter, at A. Ogolevets's request, in 1935 built an experimental instrument of the harpsichord type with a 17-tone equally tempered octave. In 1945 Seletsky completed an instrument with a 29-tone equally tempered octave.

Not only was Seletsky an outstanding connoisseur of musical instruments, but his exceptionally sensitive ear enabled him to construct the 29-tone octave without the help of any kind of accoustical instrument. Laboratory tests, it is true, may show that he has made mistakes, but they amount to no more than one-hundredth of a per cent of the number of vibrations.

Seletsky is not striving for a new equal temperament, for which he does not see artistic or practical need, but for an enrichment of the old 12-tone temperament by notes that exist in music but are not found on the piano.

In his new instrument (also of the harpsichord type) the seven white keys remain the same. But each of the five former black keys is divided into four, making a total of 20. Between E and F and between B and C there is one black key divided into four parts, with four corresponding tones. That gives the entire octave 35 keys and as many different sounds.

Musical circles became extremely interested in this new attempt to establish the laws of the "pure scale." Seletsky demonstrated how his instrument helps, for example, in recognizing the concrete forms of the folk scales used in the compositions of Schumann and other composers. The new theoretical



The musician and inventor Yakov Seletsky

explanation of the laws of the "pure scale", in the opinion of the author, also makes it possible to improve the recording and performance of the musical folklore of any country. And, finally, the author has demonstrated how his instrument helps understand ancient instruments, the secret of whose stringing has been lost.

It goes without saying that this is not a concert instrument; with so many keys to the octave, the pianist or organist would need a completely new finger technique, far more complex and perhaps even impossible to attain. There is another way, and that is by using photo-elements to produce sound; there are instruments of this sort in Moscow and they have been demonstrated on the concert stage. But that is not the same instrument as the piano from the artistic point of view (for one thing, it is different in tone); it merely bears an outward resemblance to the piano. We should not care to hazard a guess as to the outcome of these experi-

ments with the construction of a concert, non-tempered, piano-like instrument. Granted the utmost success we believe that it will find a place for itself, but will not replace the good old piano with its hammers struck from a keyboard, with which the lofty tradition of pianoforte music is associated. On the other hand, it may be that an instrument will be developed maintaining the characteristics of the piano, but so much more advanced and rich in possibilities, that it will replace the piano which will be ranged in the gallery of musical antiques, alongside the spinet, the clavicytherium and the clavichord which replaced one another and were, in turn, crowded out by the piano.

However, it can definitely be said today that Seletsky's invention, while it may not immediately alter the practice of the concert stage, will not remain unnoticed in the realm of general musical culture, instrumental musical history and ethnography.

IVAN SAZONOV

NEWS AND VIEWS

LITERATURE

WRITERS AS DEPUTIES

In the Soviet land the writer is an active force in the state and public life of his country. We approached some of the writer-deputies to the Supreme Soviet who came to Moscow from the national republics, asking them how they are coping with their duties as deputies. Here are some of the replies:

Pavlo Tychina, Ukrainian poet, Minister of Education of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.



"My electors seek my aid and advice on every kind of question—housing difficulties, material assistance, child welfare. . . I spend the greater part of my time in the Ministry of Education, and it is there that I receive my electors.

"This summer I had occasion to visit a number of Ukrainian villages. In Viazinka and Velikaya Bogachka I helped the inhabitants to organize a library and in another village lent a hand in procuring musical instruments for the young folk. People turn to me with all kinds of requests and the material submitted to me as deputy gives me deep insight into the life going on around me."

Shalva Dadiani, Georgian playwright.

"My advice and collaboration are sought by people from many parts of Georgia; sometimes it is a question of building a highway; at others, the construction of a water works. In the village of Chingarabuli, where there was only an elementary school, I helped the inhabitants to build a secondary school.

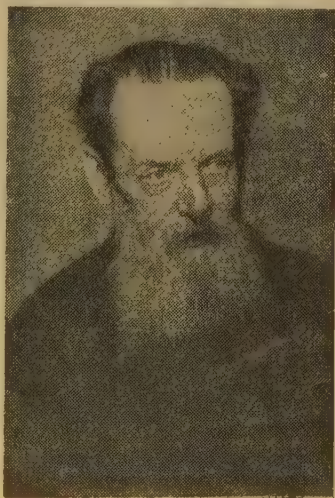
"The talks with my constituents often provide food for me as a writer. There's a village called Chadydzhvari, for example, it's



a well-to-do, prosperous community, and the inhabitants generally come to me with questions touching on their cultural interests. On one occasion they said they would like me to write a book describing people and happenings on a collective farm—they evidently take it amiss that writers give too little attention to this aspect of life. I have observed farm life and labour in various parts of the country. What interesting men and women! What a variety of rich natures, of complicated vital conflicts! I hope to fulfil my electors' wishes by writing a book about collective farm life."

Pavel Bazhov, a writer of fairy tales from the Urals.

"I receive hundreds of letters a month. Not a day passes but electors come to me with all kinds of questions and requests. And I do my best, of course, to go thoroughly



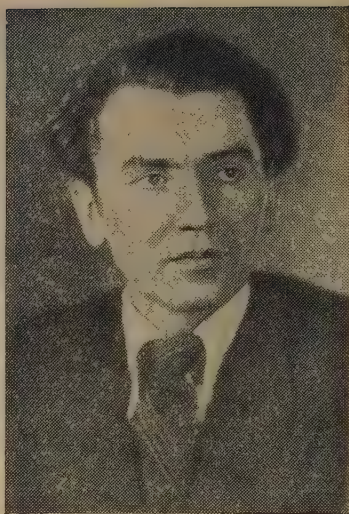
into every matter submitted to me for consideration.

"I often find my activities as deputy closely bound with my work as a writer. Among the letters from my electors I get quite a number of manuscripts—mainly verses sent by young authors—my countrymen from the Urals. I am always glad to help them with friendly advice."

Yakub Kolas, Belorussian poet.

"Thirty years of my life I spent away from my own village of Nikolayevshchina where I was born and where my childhood years were passed. One day—it was hot, dry weather—a fire broke out in the village, and three hundred households were burnt to the ground; when I heard of the terrible plight of the villagers, I addressed myself to the government, urging immediate measures to be initiated. Everything possible was done. I backed negotiations for the building of a secondary school in the village and I am happy to say that it will soon open its doors to the younger generation of my countrymen. My efforts are now directed to having a good hospital built there, as well as suitable premises to house the village Soviet.

"The Germans burnt and carried off quantities of books from Belorussia before they left it, and so, naturally, I have the youth and the schoolteachers coming to me for help in procuring new books. I do what



of eminent men. There are letters, too, from peasants eager to enter farming artels.

"Not very long ago I made a journey," Boukov said, "throughout the length and breadth of Moldavia. I met some very interesting people at Dubossary. An aged man of sixty said to me: 'I have lived a long time in the world, and I thought I knew life, but when Stalin's book was read to us, I saw my old land of Moldavia and myself in quite a new light!'"

TO THE MEMORY OF ARKADI GAIDAR

Not far from the town of Kanev in the Ukraine, under a large oak tree growing near a railway sentry box, is a soldier's grave. The inscription on the simple wooden cross tells us that Arkadi Gaidar, fighter in a partisan detachment is buried here.

Gaidar is one of the favourite writers of Soviet children, from whose pen have come so many stories and tales, among them *School*, *Distant Lands*, *Military Secret*, *The Blue Cup*, *The Fate of a Drummer-Boy*, *Chuk and Gek*, *The Hot Stone*, *Timur and His Team*. The name of the boy Timur in the last-named book, written on the eve of the war, has become a name to conjure with among Soviet schoolboys. Following Timur's example, thousands of Soviet children devotedly helped their elders during the hard war years, doing their bit in the war effort. Great interest attaches to one of Arkadi Gaidar's earlier books—*School*, which is to a large extent autobiographical. The destinies of the hero, a boy of fourteen, who went off to the Civil War to fight for the bright kingdom of socialism bears a strong resemblance to the life story of the writer himself. Gaidar was little more than a boy when he joined the Red Army, fighting on six fronts and eventually commanding a regiment. When he became a famous writer he never forgot he was a soldier. In 1941, when the Germans treacherously attacked the Soviet Union, Arkadi Gaidar joined the army as a war-correspondent. His articles took the form of sketches and short stories centring round



I can. It's a great happiness to serve the people, and it is in this service that lies the meaning of my work as deputy and as poet."

Emilian Boukov, Moldavian writer.

The deputy from the Soviet Moldavian Republic regularly receives people coming to him both singly and in delegations from the villages and factories. They ask for help to procure new selected seeds; for help in tracing relatives herded off into Hitler captivity; for school textbooks, and dictionaries; for advice as to where to send for biographies

remarkable Soviet patriots. . . . Gaidar's unit was surrounded and cut off from his regiment. There was a plan for flying him back across the lines in a plane, but he refused to leave his comrades, and stayed on where he was, fighting in a guerrilla column. And once more he became a soldier, just as twenty years before. One day, together with three of his companions he engaged a large German patrol. All four were killed in the unequal encounter, and their comrades buried them in a common grave. Five years have passed since that date. There was a memorial evening to mark the occasion at the Moscow Writers' Club when friends and readers of Arkadi Gaidar assembled to honour his memory. Among those present in the crowded hall were many writers for children: Samuil Marshak, Sergei Mikhalkov, Constantine Paustovsky, Ruvim Frayerman, Agnia Barto. . . . The proceedings were opened by the poet Samuil Marshak. The critic, Lev Subotsky spoke of the talented writer as the children's friend who with his books helped them to find the right road in life. One after another, writers who had known Gaidar and held him in affection, came forward with appreciations and reminiscences. Frayerman read out a cheerful letter he had received from Gaidar from the South, shortly before the war. "I am sitting on the beach," Arkadi Gaidar wrote. "I am fed here, put to bed, and washed. . . . I am working hard. For one thing there's my living to be earned by the sweat of my brow; for another, I have to justify my existence before men and beasts; before all kinds of birds of the air, such as sparrows and nightingales, and fishes of the sea, such as carp and tench, mud-fish and bream, dace and perch. As to the silly gremille and the vicious pike, I've nothing to justify myself for before them."

The next to mount the platform was a sailor, a slender young fellow, with a sun-bronzed complexion, in a trim seaman's



jersey, and a medal on his breast. He was Timur, the twenty-year-old son of the late writer. It was after his own boy that Gaidar called the hero of his famous book, *Timur and His Team*.

Arkadi Gaidar is no more. But his books will remain a treasured possession of Soviet youth. "We greet the immortality of fame, the immortality of literature," said the writer Victor Shklovsky. Gaidar's readers will keep his books alive, as the Ukrainian collective farmers have preserved the grave where his body lies buried.

A one-volume edition of Gaidar's works is to appear shortly in the School Library Series of the *Children's Publishing House*, as well as a hundred thousand copies of a selection of Gaidar's works in the *Soviet Writer* edition.

FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF YAKUB KOLAS' CREA- TIVE WORK

A gathering marking the fortieth anniversary of the literary activities of Yakub Kolas, Belorussia's national poet, was recently held at the Moscow Writers Club.

"The jubilee of Yakub Kolas," said Nikolai Tikhonov, the writer, addressing the gathering, "is a festival of Soviet poetry." The melodious verse of the Belorussian poet, breathing an ardent love of country, has been translated into the languages of many nationalities of the U.S.S.R. The poet's voice resounded with a particular appeal in the years of the Great Patriotic War, His



Arkadi Gaidar at the microphone

verses fired the flames of revenge in the hearts of Belorussian partisans. The Order of the Red Banner was his reward for services rendered to our country.

Yakub Kolas, who read his latest poems in the Belorussian language, received a warm welcome from his audience. The theme of his new poem *The Fisherman's Hut* is the fight waged by the Belorussian people against the German forces of occupation.

TOPICAL COLLECTIONS OF LITERARY MATERIAL SPONSORED BY MUSEUM OF LITERATURE

On the occasion of the 800th anniversary of Moscow, an event which falls in April, 1947, the State Literary Museum is bringing out several collections of topical material.

One of the volumes: *Literary Excursions Through Moscow* is devoted to places in the capital connected with the life and labour of Russian writers. There will be several essays dealing with the Moscow of Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol, Alexander Ostrovsky, Leo Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov, Maxim Gorky and Vladimir Mayakovsky.

Literary Moscow is a survey of the literary life of the city—its literary societies, coteries, publishing houses, writers' congresses, inaugurations of monuments to writers, literary jubilees, and so on. One of the essays bears the title *Images of Moscow in the Writings of Russian Men of Letters*; another volume, *Literary Places in Moscow Region*, to appear in two issues, will offer the reader interesting descriptions of some old country seats bound up with the names of Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Chekhov, Herzen, Barantynski, Tyutchev and Aksakov.

LITERARY MUSEUM IN LENINGRAD

The Literary Museum of the Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., whose work was interrupted

for over five years by the war, is now about to open its doors to the public again. The rooms devoted to the life and writings of Alexander Pushkin have been enriched by portraits of the poet's ancestors and many illustrations to his works done by Soviet artists. The Mikhail Lermontov room has also been enriched by new illustrations to his writings and some drawings made by the poet himself. The Leo Tolstoy rooms have portraits from the brushes of Ilya Repin, Leonid Pasternak, and Nikolai Ge. Conspicuous among the exhibits connected with the life and works of Maxim Gorky is the famous portrait of the writer painted by Repin.

YOUNG ACTORS INVITED TO MEET HEROES OF FAVOURITE BOOK

A novel which has gained extraordinary popularity is *The Young Guard* by Alexander Fadeyev. The heroes are real people who lived in the town of Krasnodon, who loved their country, fought for it with supreme courage and fell fighting, gaining immortality in the grateful memory of their people. In the public square of Krasnodon, there is a common grave where the heroic young patriots, Oleg Koshevov, Uliana Gromova, Lyubov Shevtsova, Sergei Tyulenin and their gallant comrades have been laid to rest. The images of the heroes of Krasnodon have stirred the imagination of actors, writers, poets and sculptors. The students of the Moscow Art Theatre School have chosen a stage version of Fadeyev's novel as their graduation production.

An evening was recently arranged where the students were invited to meet Elena Koshevaya, the mother of Oleg Koshevov, and the three surviving members of the underground organization operating at Krasnodon—Zhora Arutyunyan, Valya Borts and Tolya Lopukhov. The young actors had already made the acquaintance of these fearless patriots in the pages of Fadeyev's book, and were now given the opportunity of meeting in real



Zhora Arutyunyan's

Valya Borts

Tolya Lopukhov

life the characters they were going to impersonate on the stage.

In the students' opinion, these meetings made an ineffaceable impression and have been a tremendous help in the staging of Fadeyev's *The Young Guard*.

NEW EDITIONS OF CLASSICS

The State Literary Publishing House has prepared for publication several volumes of the works of Russian classical writers with illustrations by prominent artists.

In the drawings to Gogol's *Dead Souls*, Pyotr Sokolov, a talented artist of the 19th century (1821-1899), offers a gallery of life-like images from Gogol's books. What we see are penetrating character sketches of the personages rather than faithful portraits of the every-day setting and details of the life of the period. These illustrations had been stored for many decades in the department of rare books at the Lenin Library, and this is the first time they will see the light of day. The new edition of *Dead Souls* will contain ninety-three drawings in all. The make-up of the book is the work of Nikolai Ilyin who has also done the illustrations for another of the publications in the series, *Masquerade* by Lermontov. Dostoyevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment* is illustrated by drawings from the pen of Konstantinov.

AN UNKNOWN PORTRAIT OF MAXIM GORKY

A rare portrait of Maxim Gorky from the brush of Ivan Malyutin has recently been discovered in Leningrad. It was painted on commission of Fyodor Chaliapin in 1906, after Gorky's liberation from the Peter and Paul fortress. The writer is portrayed bent over his writing table in a loose black jacket, with the goatee and moustache he affected for some time after he came out of prison. An open note-book is lying before him. For the past forty years the picture has been in the possession of a theatrical family in Leningrad and has never been reproduced. It is to be hung in one of the halls of the Literary Museum soon to be opened in Leningrad.

THEATRE

A PLAY ABOUT SOVIET SEAMEN

A play that is enjoying considerable popularity on the stages of more than one Soviet theatre is Boris Lavrenev's *For Those Out at Sea*, a piece that has been honoured with a Stalin Prize. The action is laid in an environment of naval officers and men in the days of the Great Patriotic War. The dramatic conflict lies in the collision of two moral principles, embodied in the two principal figures of the play—Borovsky and Maximov.

Captain Borovsky is a courageous sailor, but a man of unsteady principles and overweening ambition. War to him is first and foremost a means of attaining personal success. And in the name of ambition he hazards a risky operation involving the loss of a cutter. Then, fearing for his career, he lays the blame for the failure on the shoulders

of a comrade. This other officer, Maximov, is straightforward and unselfish, putting his duty as a soldier before every other consideration. The severe penalty awaiting him is averted by a fortunate accident and Borovsky gets the punishment he has brought down on his own head.

The play was first staged at the Pushkin Theatre of Drama at Leningrad. A critical notice contributed by the playwright Boris Chirskov speaks highly of the excellent portrayal of Maximov by the actor V. Merkuriev. "Merkuriev," the critic says, "brings into play an abundance of hardly perceptible, life-like detail stamped with the unmistakable imprint of truth. The simpler, the more workaday his manner, the more impressive and convincing becomes his personality, for it is in the mass nature of Soviet heroism that lies its appeal and its strength, and it is from communion with thousands of modest unsung heroes such as he himself that men like Maximov derive their unswerving resolve and their integrity of behaviour and action."

The characters of the officers and sailors who share Maximov's fighting life of hardship and danger are natural and true to life. *For Those Out at Sea* unfolds before the eyes of the spectators a colourful page from the life and exploits of the men of the Soviet navy.

A THEATRE IN KOLYMA

Constantine Simonov's play *Under the Chestnuts of Prague* was the opening performance of the season at the Magadan Theatre of Drama in Kolyma, a region in the Far North of the Soviet land.

This is the eighth season of one of the most remote northern professional theatres in the world. Among its productions are Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Twelfth Night*, Maxim Gorky's *Vassa Zheleznova* and *Egor Bulychev*, Leonid Leonov's *Invasion*, and Vladimir Solovyev's *Great Emperor*. In the summer months troupes go touring through the settlements scattered about the Kolyma taiga. In planes and in cars, in cutters bravely ploughing the Sea of Okhotsk, they penetrate into distant, out-of-the-way places—mines and gold fields, the collective farms of Orocheny and Yakutia, the camps of geological prospectors. During the summer months of 1946, some five hundred performances and concerts were given in the taiga by separate companies of the Magadan Theatre of Drama.

A THEATRE ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

The huge rocky mass of the Pamir Mountains is known as the Roof of the World. Even into this remote region the arts of music and drama have penetrated, and spectators can enjoy good concert programmes or watch dramatic action unfold behind the footlights of a playhouse on the Roof of the World.

For ten years now this theatre of music and drama has been playing in the very

heart of the Soviet Pamir. One of its outstanding successes is the production of Alexander Ostrovsky's *Guilty Though Guiltless*, staged in the Tajik language. The title role is played by a young actress, Savsan Bandisheyeva by name.

Born of a peasant family she showed a marked bent for singing and dancing from a very early age. In this country musical and dramatic talents are often nurtured in amateur ensembles in town and country. This was the case with the youthful Savsan Bandisheyeva. The girl's talent was noted at one of the regular reviews of folk art, at which self-taught ensembles and soloists participate. She was offered an engagement in a professional theatre. A few years passed, and Savsan became a great favourite with the public and was subsequently decorated with a government Order and awarded the title of Honoured Artist of the Tajik Republic.

The theatre perched on the Roof of the World celebrated its tenth birthday by staging a play called *The Golden Hamlet* by the Tajik dramatist Mirshakarov—the first play of Pamir life composed entirely of folklore material.

Attached to the playhouse is a Children's Ensemble composed of boys and girls from eight to sixteen years of age. Their performances are great successes with the Tajik mountain dwellers who all know and have a great fondness for the young artists and come down to attend the entertainments from settlements that remind one of the eyries of eagles.

Under the new five-year plan the Pamir Theatre is to receive a new building with a comfortable hall and modern stage installations. With its facade of Pamir marble it will be an ornament indeed to Khorog, the chief town of Soviet Pamir.

MUSIC

MOSCOW, A CANTATA

Moscow is the name of a new work by the composer Vissarion Shebalin, dedicated to the ancient Russian town which is the Soviet capital.

The Cantata consists of five parts. The first speaks of Moscow's glorious past. The second is a lyric, singing the beauty of Moscow. The middle and longest part is entitled the *Battle* and is dedicated to the heroic defence of the Soviet capital in the Great Patriotic War. Part Four is a tribute to the memory of the heroes who fell defending their native town. Part Five—*Glory*—is a triumphal apotheosis, a paean of praise to the capital of the Soviet land.

The first performers of the Cantata—choir, orchestra and soloists, are all students of the Moscow Conservatory.

TEN YEARS OF WORK

Ten years have elapsed since the Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., the largest symphonic ensemble in the country, was founded. The extensive repertoire contains all the important works of the Russian classics of symphony—from Mikhail Glinka, Sergei Ta-

neyev, Sergei Rachmaninov and Alexander Scriabin to the modern Soviet composers, as well as the best of the West-European classics.

During the Ten-Day Festivals of Soviet Music held in the past the orchestra gave programmes devoted to the works of composers of the Ukraine, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Kirghizia, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia, and other Soviet republics. Playing under the Soviet conductors, Nikolai Golovanov, Evgeni Mravinsky, Alexander Gauk and Nikolai Anosov as well as under the baton of such outstanding European masters as Otto Klemperer, Oscar Fried and Georges Enesco, has helped to complete the ensemble's development.

During the ten years of its existence, the Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. has given over one thousand four hundred concerts, attended by some two million listeners.

A SCRIBIN CYCLE

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the birth of Alexander Scriabin was marked by a cycle of concerts in Moscow, the programme containing all the composer's symphonic works.

Dreams, an orchestrated miniature, and two of his earliest symphonies, written by the composer between the years 1898 and 1902, were first conducted in Moscow by Vassili Safonov, then director of the Conservatory, from which Scriabin had graduated with a gold medal.

A great success was scored by the famous *Poem of Ecstasy* written in the years 1905 to 1908, and *Divine Poem* held by many musicians to be the most important of the composer's works. Another item on the programme was *Prometheus*, now performed on a concert platform after a long interval.

All three programmes of the Scriabin cycle were ably rendered by the Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. Radio Committee conducted by Nikolai Golovanov.

CZECH MUSIC IN THE U.S.S.R.

The musical life of Czechoslovakia is bound by old ties of friendship with Russian music. Not a few prominent Czech musicians have lived and worked in Russia—Eduard Napravnik, composer and conductor, Václav Suk, the conductor, and Josef Paleček, teacher of singing, not to mention a number of others who came to regard Russian musical culture as their own. And many Russian musicians, in their turn, from the time of Mili Balakirev to our day, have felt drawn to Czechoslovakia and made lengthy stays in that country. It was in Prague earlier than in any other foreign city, that Mikhail Glinka's two operas were performed, and in the old Czechoslovak capital that Chaikovsky, to use his own expression, experienced moments of "absolute happiness." "I came to be extremely fond of these good Czechs," wrote Chaikovsky, "and they do deserve it. Great Heavens! What raptures there were at my concerts and it isn't to be put down to my account either, but to dear old Russia's. I never even suspected to what an extent the Czechs are devoted

to Russia and how profoundly they hate the Germans."

The works of Czechoslovak composers may be constantly heard from Soviet concert platforms, and in the programmes of radio broadcasts. Smétana's famous opera, *The Bartered Bride* staged in the Maly Opera House in Leningrad this year, was very well received by the public and Rafael Kubelik, the Czech conductor, scored success wherever he appeared while touring this country.

The concerts given by the Czechoslovak musicians, Josef Paleček, Alexander Ploček, Miloš Sadlo and Alfred Goleček early in the autumn concert season, evoked considerable interest among their audiences.

The recent visit of Czechoslovak musicians to Moscow coincided with the 28th anniversary of the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic, and a concert was organized in honour of the occasion by the Society of Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries and the Moscow Philharmonic. The programme included Vitezslav Novak's symphonic poem to *V. Tatrakh*, played by the Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. under the direction of conductor Constantine Kondrashin. The Czechoslovak cellist, Miloš Sadlo, was heard in Dvořák's concerto with orchestra accompaniment, and two movements of *Along the Vaga*, an orchestral suite by Alexander Moïzes, were given. Deborah Pantoffel-Nechetskaya sang several of Dvořák's songs from the *Tsigané Melodies* cycle as well as a number of Czech folk songs. The concert concluded with *In the Czech Meadows and Forests*, the popular symphonic poem by Smétana.

ART

AN EXHIBITION OF POLISH ENGRAVINGS

An exhibition of modern Polish engravings in the halls of the Moscow Association of Artists is attracting considerable attention and interest.

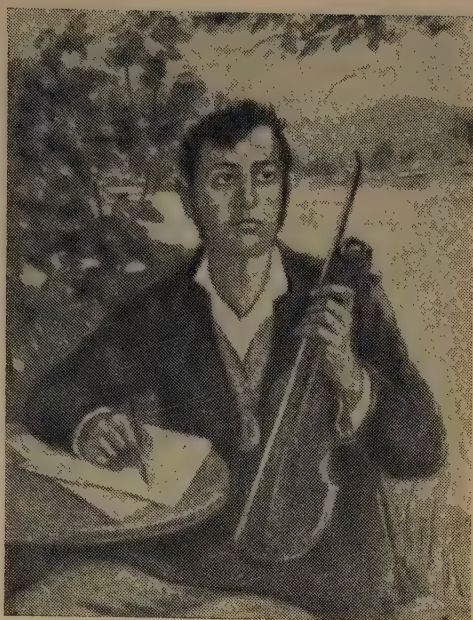
It is common knowledge that the ranks of Poland's intelligentsia were decimated by the German occupation. The inscriptions on many of the pictures on view tell us that their authors are no longer among the living—they were done to death by the Hitlerites. So perished Victoria Gorińska, Władysław Zakrzewski, Mieczysław Kotarbiński and many others.

Commenting on the success of the Polish exhibition, the Moscow papers speak of it as a display of excellent craftsmanship and of that particular taste for the art of engraving and the artistic make-up and illustration of books for which Polish graphic art is so justly famous.

VERA GLINKA

A woman of middle age, wearing a dark overcoat, with greying hair brushed back from the forehead, is sitting at an easel, palette in hand. She is Vera Glinka, the painter—a relative of the great Russian composer, Mikhail Glinka.

The canvases, studies and sketches hanging on the walls and lying about in the studio bring to life the scenery of Smolensk region



M. Glinka. By Vera Glinka

where early in the last century the future composer was born and spent his childhood years. We see the snow-covered avenue leading to the old-fashioned house with its white columns; then the lake in the setting of the forest thicket, the spreading centenarian oak tree. . . .

Here too Vera Glinka, the painter, was born in the eighties of the last century. After completing her studies in art schools in Moscow and Petersburg, she worked for some time at Paris under Matisse. Much of what she depicted on the canvases in pre-war years no longer exists; for the most valuable of the relics and monuments connected with the name of Glinka were barbariously destroyed by the Hitlerites.

"At the present moment," the artist said, "I am engaged on a cycle of pictures of places linked with memories of Glinka; that will be the sum total of my long years of work. It is my heart's desire to enshrine in my pictures the charming bit of Russian country where the genius of Glinka was nurtured."

The paintings are to be hung at the Central Museum of Musical Culture.

ARMENIAN ARTISTS BACK IN THEIR NATIVE LAND

Thousands of Armenians are returning home from foreign lands to take part in the life and labours of their own country, and among them are several painters and sculptors.

A one-man show of the works of the painter, Ovanes Zomian, is now on view at Leninakan. The artist has brought a good number of pictures back with him, landscapes, still-lives and portraits. We were greatly interested in sketches made at Beirut, Damascus, and in the towns of Palestine. Ovanes Zomian has been invited to work at the Leninakan Theatre of Drama.

Another able artist, the sculptor Agaramian, comes from Sofia, the Bulgarian capital. His work is distinguished by a laconic expressiveness, the sculptured portraits of Bulgarian public men and writers being particularly interesting.

The engravings of Papazian, a young artist, are well worth inspection. He is a master of miniature drawing.

Vartamian, who comes from Rumania, has presented some fifty of his canvases to the State Museum at Erevan.

Among the artists who have come to stay in Armenia are several who do excellent work in the applied arts. There is Garibian, for example, who shows specimens of able workmanship in his picture frames. He uses clay and gypsum, ornamenting his frames with ingenious designs and covering them with gilding or bronze.

The Armenian artists are welcome guests with their people. Many of them have received government commissions for pictures—the choice of subject being left to the taste of the authors. Large land allotments have been placed free of charge at the disposal of the new arrivals. In the spring the building of homes and workshops in the cottage-style is to be started on a large scale, backed by considerable government loans. A large exhibition is planned for the near future to show the works of all the Armenian artists who have returned to their homeland.

CINEMA

THE SON OF THE REGIMENT

Mists sailing over dark masses of forest land; over charred thickets, across trenches. A cold, wet frontline morning. In a deep, shell-hollowed crater a small boy lies asleep—dead-tired, emaciated, ragged. This is the opening scene of the film, *A Son of the Regiment*¹.

¹ From the novel *A Son of the Regiment* by Valentin Katayev, published in *International Literature*, No. 11, 1945.

The director, Vassili Pronin, has been fortunate in finding the right boy for the leading role. Himself brought up in a home for war waifs, the young actor, Yura Yankin, not only resembles the little shepherd boy of Katayev's story in looks, but is also like him in the main features of his own life story. Yura also lost kith and kin in the war and was adopted by a regimental unit; had tasted the bitterness of loneliness and looked close into the horrible face of war; he also, in the end, experienced the joy of meeting once more with his own, Russian people. These past griefs and hardships have no doubt helped the boy-actor to cope so expertly with his first part on the screen.

He behaves in the film just as the real Vanya Solntsev would have done in real life. He is simple and naive, but brave and resolute withal. He is touching in his efforts to be like a real soldier. The boy's nature is not revealed in heroic exploits—it is not given to him to perform any deeds of valour—but in his attitude towards the events he lives through and the people he falls in with.

In Valentin Katayev's book the author raises the grave problem of overcoming the loneliness—the orphanhood of parentless children in the Soviet land, and he stresses his denial of this as a social and psychological phenomenon. The writer's idea is strongly and convincingly embodied in the film.

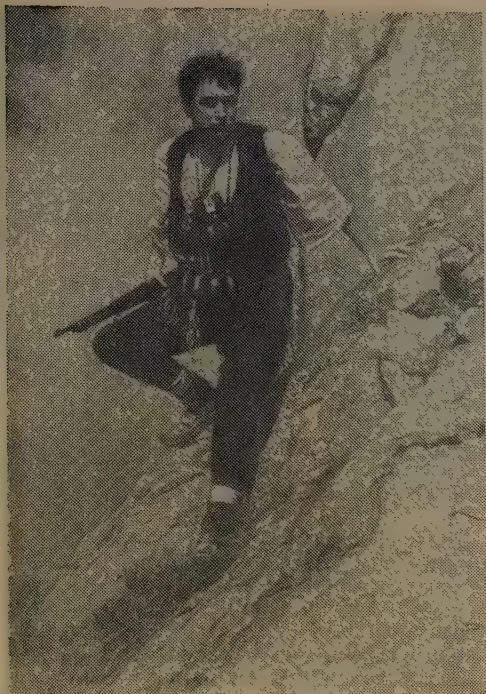
The ending is highly effective. The boy's chum, a tried frontline soldier, brings the boy to a Suvorov school. It is early morning. The sun sparkles in glittering high lights on the marble columns of the broad white staircase. The Suvorov lads come marching down in stately ranks. The little shepherd boy of yesterday gazes at them, fascinated. A new life is opening before him.

IN THE MOUNTAINS OF YUGOSLAVIA

The heroism of the Yugoslav people, their unswerving will to resistance is the theme of a new film *In the Mountains of Yugoslavia*. The task confronting the scenario writer,



Still from the film *A Son of the Regiment*



Still from the film In the Mountains of Yugoslavia

Georgi Mdivani, and the producer, Abraham Room, was to depict the people's struggle in Yugoslavia, showing how the different nationalities became conscious of the necessity for this struggle; how Serbs, Montenegrins, Croats, Macedonians and Bosnians, overcoming their national isolation, all united in the name of a great cause.

A Serbian peasant, Slavko Babich acts as the spokesman of these complex processes within the national life. The embodiment of the united will to struggle on is Marshal Tito. These two heroes—leader and peasant, are the central figures around which the story is woven.

Through Babich we see the growing consciousness in the minds of the partisans. When in the beginning a messenger from Tito calls the highland peasants to the struggle, Babich still doubts that the fascists will hurt him or his family. "Don't think," the messenger says to the peasant, "that if you live way up there in the mountains they won't be able to get at you."

"All right then, I'll wait for them here," Babich replies.

But when the Hitlerites do reach the mountain hamlets after all, Babich in his first passionate outburst of anger towards those who have dared to raise their hand against his harvest, and later inspired by a consciousness of the profound meaning of the partisan movement—becomes the leader of the people's struggle for freedom. Babich is played by Nikolai Mordvinov; and although Marshal Tito, played by Ivan Bersenev, appears only in the beginning and towards the end of the film, his dominating personality permeates the entire play, determining the behavior of each partisan.

The action unfolds against the background of the austere and picturesque scenery of Yugoslavia.

The shots, producer Abraham Room told us, were made in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Dalmatia. We always tried, he said, to select the historical spots where the events actually took place. Studio work was done in a little town on the Adriatic coast. We had only four Russian actors who came from Moscow. As for the other characters—there are some thirty in the picture, we selected all of them from among the natives. They were, in the main, young actors who had in the past really been members of the partisan movement. For the mass scenes we had soldiers of the Yugoslavian Army who had also fought in the ranks of the guerrillas; the greatest help and encouragement were given by the Yugoslav government and Marshal Tito. The Marshal discussed with us the scenario and other questions concerning the film and had many talks with Ivan Bersenev, who played the role of Tito.



Still from the film In the Mountains of Yugoslavia

THE YOUTH OF OUR COUNTRY

In this documentary there are no actors, no story, no dramatic denouement. And yet the interest in this picture never flags. The authors have recorded on the screen a vivid spectacle—the Sports Parade in the Moscow Dynamo Stadium in the summer of 1946. The traditional fête of Soviet Youth deploys before your eyes like a beautiful fairy tale of the youth of a great country.

The author of the film, producer Sergei Yutkevich, did not confine himself to a dry reproduction of the scenes, he has endeavoured to create a film which should give a poetical presentation of the event. And this is the main feature of this new production of the Soviet newsreel.

The very beginning of the picture is a poetical introduction to the great theme of the youth of the Soviet epoch. The summer sun is rising over Moscow. The ancient towers of the Kremlin are aglow with a rosy light. Reflected in the waters of the Moskva you see their crenellated walls, the cast-iron carving of the new bridges, the massed bulk of tall houses. The town is awaking. And from every direction, from the ends of the country trains are rushing along, steamers plough the waters and planes speeding through the skies. The sportsmen of sixteen republics are hastening to the capital of the Soviet Union for the great festival.

The Soviet land is indeed vast, spacious and varied. The golden fields of luxuriant Ukrainian wheat; the dense forests of Belorussia, the snow-capped mountains of Armenia, the boundless steppes of Kazakhstan, the majestic breadth of the Volga, the flowering gardens of Georgia, the ancient castles of the Baltic. . . And after every lyrical glimpse into these glorious regions, the film brings us back again to the Dynamo Stadium with its thousands upon thousands of young men and women who have journeyed all the way to Moscow from their distant picturesque homelands. The film has recorded the opening march of sportsmen from all the sixteen republics, the drill of the sports clubs, the performances of national delegations and of school-children. We see outstanding masters of sport: running, playing dumb-bells, boxing, wrestling, throwing quoits, performing feats of gymnastic skill; we see a match between

the two best football teams in the country—the Central House of the Red Army, and the Moscow Dynamo Sports Club. Every kind of sport—the intensity of the contest, the beauty and harmony of the human body are vividly shown in the film. Two tiny figures, a boy and a girl, leaving the column of the smallest athletes go running up the broad steps leading to the central box in the stadium to present bouquets of flowers to Stalin and Molotov. Stalin picks the boy up and places him on the balcony beside him.

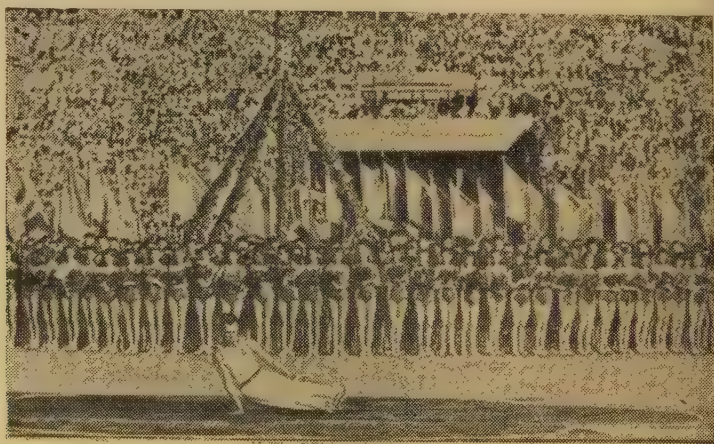
The Youth of Our Country is a beautiful story of the young people of Sovietland. At the World Cinema Festival at Cannes in France the film was awarded an international prize and a peace prize—two coveted distinctions.

MISCELLANEOUS

A MOSCOW ARCHITECTURAL GEM

The country-seat of Arkhangelskoye, an old manor house, which gives one the impression of being painted against the green background of the park, dates from the 18th century. In those times people thought natural scenery monotonous and tried to improve it in every possible way. With a view to creating unexpected effects forest thickets were felled to the ground or, on the contrary, fields were planted with trees and shrubs and fanciful structures were erected. The shapes of plants were altered to give them quaint outlines; artificial streams were dug, grottos and summer houses bathed in verdure were constructed, and the paths of parks ornamented with statues. All these old-time whims and fancies have been preserved in the Arkhangelskoye estate. Early in the last century Arkhangelskoye passed into the possession of N. B. Yusupov, a wealthy landed proprietor who placed the canvases of famous painters, suites of rare furniture and the originals and casts of antique sculptures in the halls of the manor. There are some wonderful works of art made by talented self-taught peasants. The lovely hangings and upholstery are of silk embroidery worked by Russian serfs. The delicate porcelain which aroused the admiration of Yusupov's guests was also manufactured by the skilled hands of Yusupov's serfs.

Still from the film *The Youth of Our Country*



Park in Arkhangelskoye



Beyond an iron railing of exquisite workmanship lies a stately courtyard in which the number of columns is astounding. Leading from the central hall of the house to the two wings near the entrance are covered galleries on columns. At one time there was yet another colonnade against a background of foliage facing the lower floors of the wings of the house, which gave one the impression that the courtyard was entirely surrounded by colonnades and that the verdure that glimpsed beyond them was a continuation of the forest adjoining the park.

A spacious vestibule leads to the central hall, an apartment oval in form and ornamented with Corinthian columns placed in pairs. From the great windows, a view opens onto the vistas of the park, and a forest avenue which loses itself in the distance. In the gallery running round this hall, an orchestra of serf-musicians used to play during the festivals which were frequently held at the palace. Artificial terraces lead down from the house. The way is barred by a fountain in the form of a group of playing boys. A balustrade stretches along the terrace ornamented with marble busts. Conspicuous in the depths of the park are marble casts of the Apollo Belvedere and the Versailles Diana, and some distance off is a copy of the monument to the Russian national heroes, Minin and Pozharsky, the original of which stands in the Red Square in Moscow. It would be difficult to enumerate all the art treasures in Arkhangelskoye Park. There is a little house known as "The Caprice"; there are a tea-house, a number of architectural curiosities—summer houses and grottos, galleries, ruins, stone lions, vases. . .

The names of many prominent men are connected with the Arkhangelskoye estate. Alexander Pushkin used to visit the old Prince Yusupov there and sent him a message in verse. The poet's stay in the palace is commemorated in a drawing by Nicolas de Courteuil. We see Yusupov receiving his guests among whom we recognize Pushkin and his great friend, Pyotr Vyazemsky. The theatre in the park brings to mind the name of the celebrated scenery painter, Pietro Gonzago. It was built after his design in 1817-1818, and is important in the history of the Russian theatre.

The estate of Arkhangelskoye is the only place where original scenery painted by this master is now to be seen. "I still love Arkhangelskoye," wrote Alexander Herzen. "How charming is this little bit of the earth! Have you ever been to Arkhangelskoye? If not—go there now." Herzen's advice is followed by hikers and excursionists who daily visit Arkhangelskoye, this pearl of Moscow Region which now belongs to the people.

A HISTORY OF MOSCOW

The Academy of Sciences Institute of History is compiling a *History of Moscow*, a work of many volumes. It is being issued on the occasion of the eight hundredth anniversary of the city, which will be celebrated in 1947.

Volumes I and II show the historical growth of Moscow as the economic, political, military, and cultural centre of Russia. The material of volume II, in part, revives pictures of Moscow life in the 18th century when the city's cultural influence was growing stronger and stronger. Books and periodicals flowed in a steady stream from Moscow throughout the length and breadth of Russia. Moscow University had become the centre of education and of the development of national culture. Prominent men of learning, writers, architects, musicians and actors whose work promoted the growth of Russian culture lived and worked in Moscow.

Volume III covers the period from the beginning of the 19th century to the year 1894, dealing consecutively with questions of the economic growth of the city, the extension of its territory, the composition of its population, the structure and activities of the municipal government. Important events in Moscow's public, cultural and every-day life are consecutively recorded, and special chapters are devoted to themes connected with outstanding events of the 19th century—the invasion of Napoleon, the Decembrist uprising, the Crimean War, and so on.

Volume IV contains the history of Moscow from 1894 to 1917. Volume V is devoted to revolutionary Moscow—from the year 1917 to 1941. The VIth and last volume recounts the story of Moscow in the years of the Great

Patriotic War, when Russia's capital became a frontline town, a symbol of the heroism and invincibility of the Soviet people.

The publication is to be copiously illustrated and supplied with plans and topographical indexes.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE YAUZA

Excavations are proceeding in Moscow, near the mouth of the Yauza, a river traversing several sectors of the city. A number of objects have been found bearing evidence that there were dwellings here as far back as the 12th and 13th centuries. A spindle made of rose-coloured schist such as were produced in Russia in the pre-Mongol period has been unearthed. Archeologists have discovered a 17th-century potter's workshop with a kiln for firing earthenware. Besides these there have been found the remains of a barn destroyed by fire, probably in the 16th century. In barrels under the floor of the barn, charred wheat, rye, and millet were discovered; this grain has lain in the earth for nearly four centuries.

MUSEUM AT ABRAMTSEVO

Among the smaller towns and suburban settlements in the vicinity of Moscow there are many where monuments connected with the history of culture and Russian national art have been preserved. But there is, probably, not one among them so closely connected with a whole constellation of great Russian painters and writers as the small settlement of Abramtsevo situated about thirty-five miles from Moscow.



Vrubel's divan at Abramtsevo

The year 1843, when the estate passed into the possession of the famous Russian writer, Aksakov, is generally considered as the beginning of Abramtsevo's literary fame. Aksakov was fifty-three years old when he came to live at Abramtsevo. He was captivated by the beauty of the spot, the abundance of game in the forests and fish in the waters. It is noteworthy that the book that first brought him to the notice of the public was called *Notes on Angling*.

In the summer of 1849 the writer Gogol came to visit Aksakov in his country home. For the author of *Inspector General* and *Dead Souls* the period was one of bitter disappointment and profound moral perturbation. It was at Abramtsevo that he read aloud the manuscript of the Second Part of *Dead Souls* which he eventually burnt with his own hands.

At Aksakov's house Gogol met many of the famous men of his time, litterateurs, actors and painters who formed the Abramtsevo coterie. Besides Turgenev and Gogol, the slavophil Khomiakov, the actor Shchepkin and other men of letters were frequent visitors.

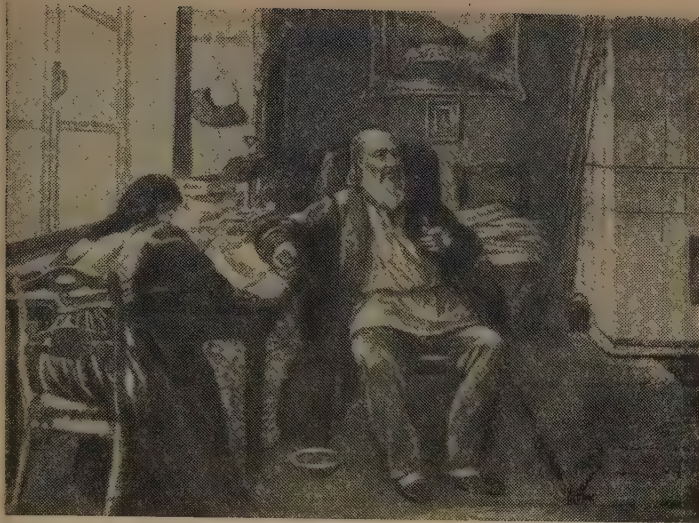
After Aksakov's death the estate passed into the ownership of Savva Mamontov, a son of the pioneer of Russian railway building, Ivan Mamontov. Savva Mamontov was a man of outstanding gifts. A connoisseur in art he soon became known as the Russian Maecenas. While he was master of the Abramtsevo estate it became a cultural and artistic centre, where many fine works of Russian art were created.

In Abramtsevo there are no large forests or rivers; no high hills or imposing landscapes, but there are spots with beauty peculiarly their own, intimate and poetical. It attracted many tellers of Northern legends and ballads and artists who loved the Russian countryside and who used to come and stay at Mamontov's house. One of these was the painter, Victor Vasnetsov.

In Russian art Vasnetsov was well known as a brilliant connoisseur of folk legends and stories and many of his paintings were illustrations to these folk tales. It was at Abramtsevo he painted his *Three Knights*, *The Tsarevich Riding the Grey Wolf*, and *Alyonushka*, all now preserved in the Moscow Tretyakov Gallery.

Ilya Repin was also a frequent visitor to this hospitable house. Studies for the pictures *Seeing the Recruit Off*, *Procession With the Cross* and *Unexpected Return*, were painted at Abramtsevo, as well as a number of portraits and pencil drawings, now preserved in the local museum.

The artists who enjoyed Mamontov's hospitality did not find life at Abramtsevo all work and no play. There were hours of relaxation and delightful leisure. There were literary evenings and private theatricals in which the guests themselves played. The life and soul of these entertainments was the painter Vassili Polenov, one of the initiators of the intimate genre in Russian landscape painting. Polenov and Repin between them painted the scenery to Gounod's *Faust*, Nikolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and Verdi's *Aida*. The young actor, Constantine Stanislavsky helped with the staging and took part in the acting.



Aksakov dictating his memoirs. Drawing by K. Trutovsky

One of the points of interests to visitors is the little church standing in the depths of the park, the construction of which was the result of the joint labours of the Abramtsevo artists. The building itself, after a design by Vasnetsov, is a replica in miniature of the famous church of Novgorod. The mural paintings and the pictures gracing the altar are the work of Polenov, Neviev, Vasnetsov and other artists.

All those who have seen the Veronica icon of the Saviour painted by Polenov will marvel at a realism that is so unusual in ecclesiastical art. Examining the face more closely they will detect in the eyes of Christ the pathetically penetrating expression of the writer Garshin whose face Polenov not infrequently used as a model.

In the middle of the eighties the Abramtsevo circle was enriched by a new crop of Russian talent—the painters Surikov, Astafyev, Kuznetsov, and others. The painter Mikhail Nesterov whose style is so peculiarly his own, owes a great debt to the beauties of Abramtsevo scenery. His *Vision of the Youth Bartholemew*, a huge canvas now in the Tretyakov Gallery, was painted on the banks of the river Vora. Nesterov's young birches, transparent as lighted candles all spun over with a bluish haze, are a lasting memory to their prototypes in the Abramtsevo grounds.

Valentin Serov, the master of portrait painting, who from an early age was brought up on the estate, is another star in the Abramtsevo constellation. He took an active part in the artistic life there and was personally acquainted with many of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages. The impressions of that interesting time and the memories of

faces he had known there are stamped in many of his paintings.

Mamontov's twelve-year-old daughter was the original of *A Girl With Peaches*, a gem of Russian portraiture. The picture breathes the poetry of that delightful spot.

Visitors to the park will see an extraordinary-looking seat, striking both in the quaintness of its ornament and its vivid colour scheme. It is a divan in majolica worked by Vroubel. The latter's name is connected with yet another hobby in vogue at Abramtsevo, namely, ceramics.

A special workshop was set up on the estate, and the artists made stubborn and ardent searches for the recipes of the old Russian and Middle Asia majolica. The fruits of their labour may be seen at the local museum.

Another interesting departure at Abramtsevo was the handicrafts museum with a carpenter's shop attached to it. Here was housed a collection of the work of native home industries—woodcarvings, artistic hand-spun fabrics and embroideries. Some of the articles illustrating the themes of folk legends were awarded prizes at exhibitions in Europe and America.

In 1918 a decision of the Soviet Government nationalized the estate and a museum was set up at Abramtsevo; it contains 1,500 exhibits and includes the church and the extensive grounds stretching over several kilometres.

On the opposite bank of the river a summer resort for artists has been built. Living and working there at the present moment are Igor Grabar, Stalin Prize winner, Vera Mukhina, the sculptress, and other representatives of the Soviet graphic arts.

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